FIRST STEPS ON THE PATH

GEOFFREY HODSON

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FIRST STEPS ON THE PATH

FROM A SERIES OF TALKS TO A GROUP

BY

GEOFFREY HODSON

(Second Edition)

THEOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE

ADYAR, MADRAS, INDIA

1928

DEDICATION

TO

KING ARTHUR

First Edition : 1927
Second Edition : 1928

INTRODUCTION

I HAVE read with much interest Mr. Hodson's *First Steps on the Path*. Much has already been written on this subject, and when I began I wondered whether it was worth while adding to the existing literature, much of which is most authoritative. I was agreeably surprised to find, however, that although Mr. Hodson has not added to our existing knowledge on the subject, he has certainly brought to it an original and stimulating point of view. He has helped to bring the facts of the Path of Holiness into relation with everyday life, applying them to ordinary circumstances, so that we may feel that the Path may well be trodden by people who are of necessity immersed in the daily routine of the outer world.

GEORGE S. ARUNDALE

PREFACE

THE subject-matter of this book is taken from notes of talks to a group of fellow-students, who meet regularly for study, meditation and self-training.

In the hope that they may be of some help to beginners, the notes have been collected and arranged in book form, under the three headings of: "Meditation," "The Path" and "The Masters".

GEOFFREY HODSON

Sir Percivale says :

THEN he ask'd us, knight by knight, if any
Had seen it, all their answers were as one :
"Nay, Lord, and therefore have we sworn our vows."

"Lo now," said Arthur, "Have ye seen a cloud?
What go ye into the wilderness to see?"

Then Galahad on a sudden, and in a voice
Shrilling along the hall to Arthur called :
"But I, Sir Arthur, saw the Holy Grail,
I saw the Holy Grail and heard a cry—
'O Galahad, and O Galahad, follow me.'"

. . . . . .

. . . When the hermit made an end,
In silver armour suddenly Galahad shone
Before us, and against the chapel door
Laid lance, and enter'd, and we knelt in prayer.
And there the hermit slaked my burning thirst,
And at the sacring of the mass I saw
The holy elements alone ; but he :
"Saw ye no more? I, Galahad, saw the Grail,
The Holy Grail, descend upon the shrine :
I saw the fiery face as of a child
That smote itself into the bread, and went ;
And hither am I come : and never yet
Hath what thy sister taught me first to see,
This Holy Thing, fail'd from my side, nor come
Cover'd, but moving with me night and day,

Fainter by day, but always in the night
Blood-red, and sliding down the blacken'd marsh
Blood-red, and on the naked mountain top
Blood-red, and in the sleeping mere below
Blood-red. And in the strength of this I rode
Shattering all evil customs everywhere,
And past thro' Pagan realms, and made them mine,
And clash'd with Pagan hordes, and bore them down,
And broke thro' all, and in the strength of this
Come victor. But my time is hard at hand
And hence I go; and one will crown me king
Far in the spiritual city; and come thou, too,
For thou shalt see the vision when I go."

While thus he spake, his eye, dwelling on mine,
Drew me, with power upon me, till I grew
One with him, to believe as he believed.
Then, when the day began to wane, we went.[1]

[1] Tennyson, *The Holy Grail.*

CHAPTER I

MEDITATION

At the present time numbers of people are beginning to be conscious that a change is occurring within them: they begin to find that the pleasures of life are ceasing to give satisfaction; that the acquisition of wealth and possessions is losing its driving power as a motive; and that physical achievement, material success and the acclamations of the world no longer appear as objectives worthy of their whole endeavour. Yet neither the desire for achievement nor the urge towards concentrated action for the fulfilment of ambition grows less; on the contrary, it becomes stronger day by day: it is the ambition which is changing, the direction and the goal which are new. There is a tendency to think in terms of unity, to see co-ordination and co-operation at work behind the apparent diversity of external phenomena.

The aspiration, nay, the longing to work for others, to achieve the common good, to heal, to teach and to serve, begins to be felt and to become the basis for every activity; the desirability of every form of action is judged according to its value to the community, instead of to the personal self.

These changes are in no way artificial. They appear as perfectly natural phenomena accompanying the evolution of the soul; as phases, like those of the growth of a plant which, after concentrating the whole of its powers in forcing its way through the soil, reaches the air and begins to expand, to form leaf and stem, that, later, it may shed upon the world the beauty and fragrance of its flower.

The realization of the vision, which at this stage is passing before the inner eye of the soul, gradually becomes the one purpose of life. It is a vision of a world made beautiful and a humanity made glad; a world in which every resource developed, every power realized, is devoted to the common good; a humanity which has fulfilled the highest of all ideals, the complete mastery of the lower personal self and its subordination to the higher—that Inner Ruler immortal which resides in every man. The fulfilment of that vision is within the power of the seer, for it is more than the vision of a dream; it is a prophecy; it is the soul's realization of its own splendid future.

Throughout all ages, so the Ancient Wisdom tells us, men have realized this dream and have won liberation from the dominion of the pairs of opposites, those twin illusions of the lower world. It also tells us the way by which fulfilment may be achieved. Many have found and have trodden the Path which leads to self-realization; seers, prophets, saints and saviours have written and spoken of that ancient way, the "razor edged," the "steep and narrow" path; from them we may learn much that will help

us in following their example. Foremost amongst their teachings is that of the necessity for the practice of meditation; let us, therefore, at the beginning of our study give consideration to this important subject.

It is essential, however, that the student should be quite clear in his mind that his motive is right. The effect of meditation is to release the hidden powers of the soul, and the only permissible motive for doing this is that of the development of greater capacities for service; whenever personal and selfish aims, desire for power and for self-aggrandisement, find an entrance into the consciousness, the soul is in danger; therefore the student must, from the very first, purge himself thoroughly of every inclination in this direction.

The object of meditation is to achieve identification of the personality with the ego, and, later, of the ego with the monad,[1] and finally to obtain union with God. Ultimately, the Divinity within must shine freely through the bodies in which it is imprisoned, and the personal consciousness must be awakened to a full and unbroken realization of the Divine Presence.

Although the method by which these ideals are to be attained will differ with every human being, there are certain broad and general lines which may be indicated. The student, after following these, may develop the method best suited to his particular temperament.

[1] See *The Monad*, by the Rt. Rev. C. W. Leadbeater.

The starting point always remains the same; it is the knowledge that the power of attainment, the path, and the goal, are *within* ourselves. If, at any time during the course of our endeavours, we find that the resistance seems too great, and that our courage is failing, it will be due to our failure to hold on to the realization of this fact; we shall have identified ourselves with the external and temporary aspect of our nature, instead of with the enthroned immortal Godhead which is our true Self. Courage and strength may always be regained by withdrawing the mind from the problems of the moment, and fixing it firmly upon this essential truth.

Before proceeding to consider the various methods of meditation, let us analyse our task, and so find the factors which govern its fulfilment. All those to which consideration is given below, are part of our constitution and within our control, with the exception, perhaps, of Karma; and even this may be so modified by the attitude of mind in which its decrees are received, and by daily conduct, that it, too, may be controlled in some measure. The equipment with which we approach the Path in this life depends largely upon our previous incarnations; our progress will be rapid and sure, or slow and hesitating, with all the possible variations between, according to the measure of our success in past lives, the position on the Path to which we have attained, and the will-power, wisdom and intelligence with which we take up the task again in this life. The particular direction and method which will be

natural to us, will also be largely governed by our past, as also will our gifts, our physical constitution and our environment. Apart from these considerations —one might almost say in spite of them—all the other factors, which are the Higher Self, the mind, the emotions, the physical body and the environment, are well within the controlling and modifying power of the will.

The Higher Self is the immortal, ensouling principle, the real man, of which the physical personality is but a faint reflection; it dwells upon the higher levels of the mental world, in its own splendidly radiant vehicle, the causal body; it is the ego of Theosophical literature, the shining Augoeides of the Greeks. The ego possesses a complete knowledge of the evolutionary past, and the causal body is a store-house of all the capacities which have been developed since that remote period when it was first formed.

Meditation is a means of gradually bringing more and more of that radiance, knowledge and capacity through into the brain consciousness; and the effects are governed by laws as exact as any known to physical science. Though they are rigid and unyielding, the application of them will produce the result required, as surely as will that of any principle in, say, chemistry or physics. The desired consummation is only deterred by the density and unresponsiveness of the material of the personal vehicles. Just as light, however brilliant, cannot penetrate a completely opaque substance, so

is it impossible for the light of the ego to penetrate a heavy, self-centred and prejudiced mentality, a coarse and impure emotional body, and an untrained and insensitive brain; however powerfully the ego may "transmit," the mental, emotional and physical bodies will not "receive," unless they are "tuned in" to his vibratory rate.

To continue the analogy of broadcasting, the mind, which is the second factor, may be regarded as the first receiving and relay station. The object which we have before us, therefore, in preparing it for its work is to make it capable of perfect stillness for receptive purposes, and as a transmitter of concentrated action in any desired direction. To achieve this, it must become supremely elastic and free from prejudice and superstition. There are many good books which will aid the student to the achievement of this end, the titles of which are included in the list at the end of this volume.

The emotional body must be purified and cultured if it is to fulfil its function in the chain of "stations" between the ego and the brain. Every feeling must be directed towards its spiritual, instead of to its material expression. Here, again, much help may be obtained from books. The main principle is that a vice or a weakness is not conquered by entering into direct conflict with it—for this focuses thought-power on the evil, and usually has the effect of strengthening its hold—but by concentrating upon the development of the opposite quality; by this means the astral body

is made to vibrate at the rate of the desired virtue, so that the vice is "crowded out". When attempting this, it will be found helpful to raise the consciousness to the highest level attainable, and to work *from above*, with all the sense of power and light which, with practice, may be gained, instead of *from below* where, being but dimly conscious of the power of the Higher Self, we may feel the task to be beyond our strength. Sublimation, and not suppression, is the goal at which to aim; the very forces which now seem to make our path difficult will, when controlled and transmuted, be the powers by means of which we shall achieve.

We may refine the emotions by always choosing recreation, amusement and literature of a pure and æsthetic character and by avoiding, as far as possible, all that is coarse and ugly. We must, however, always be willing to contact ugliness for the sake of giving help to those in need.

The Lord Buddha said: "A healthy physical body is the first step towards Nirvana." It is our duty to be as healthy as our Karma will permit and, if the ordinary physical laws of health are obeyed, this will follow naturally upon the training of the mind and emotions. As the brain and nervous system also constitute important receiving and transmitting stations, a measure of sensitivity and refinement is essential. Right living, extreme and scrupulous personal cleanliness, a pure and vital diet, fresh air, exercise and discrimination in the use of the bodily

powers are important factors in making the body a temple worthy of the indwelling God.

Suggestions are made at the end of this volume in the hope of helping students who are not in good health, to release the healing force within themselves and to bring the powers of the physical body up to the highest possible standard. Although primarily intended as curative measures, they will also be found valuable as a regular regime and will enable the body to be maintained in perfect health and at its maximum efficiency. They are general in their application and must be adapted to individual needs.

Our attitude of mind towards environment is of more importance than the environment itself. The circumstances in which we find ourselves in any life, have been deliberately chosen in order to give us the greatest possible opportunity of making progress.

The world may be regarded as a school, and our immediate surroundings as a class, where the particular lessons which we need are taught. If the task is difficult, then the knowledge acquired will be so much the more valuable, and proportionately great will be the power of service which will result; we may be sure that, as soon as the lesson of a particular environment is learnt, we shall be moved up into the next "class". This advancement may involve a change of surroundings, or a similar result may be produced by a change in our reactions to those in which we find ourselves. However great, therefore, the adversity of the time may seem to be,

at all costs we must avoid bitterness and rebellion, for these are denials of the perfect wisdom and power of the Logos in the fulfilment of His plan, and belong to untruth, blindness and negation and, if we fall into them, we shall find ourselves bound the more tightly to the sufferings by which they are evoked.

The unchanging motto for the aspirant in all circumstances must be: "Thy will be done." Accept the adversity, not as a personal infliction, but as a natural reaction, governed by exact laws, from past conduct; find out the lessons that it has to teach, focus the whole attention upon learning them, and from that moment wisdom will begin to be born and a gradual mastery over the environment be obtained.

These, briefly stated, are the major factors in the problem. It is useful to make an impartial examination of our own position in relation to each of them, both at the beginning of our quest and, periodically, during its progress; at the same time we should take great care not to become too introspective, lest we develop a habit of morbidity and self-centredness; the middle way, of occasional "stock takings" and the immediate correction of any errors which they reveal, is perhaps the best, and one which will enable us to acquire the ideal attitude of forgetting ourselves, and thinking only of the work.

If our method of meditation has been wisely chosen and faithfully adhered to, two results may be expected: they are, the expansion of consciousness, and the purification and refinement of the vehicles.

Expansion of consciousness may be gained by continually directing the mind, away from the concrete and material, towards the abstract and immaterial; at the same time we may train the vehicles by living a mental, emotional and physical life which will have the effect of raising the tone of the whole personality. Brought down to its simplest expression, the essential characteristic of the spiritual man, from this point of view, is *tone.*

Thought is the instrument by means of which these changes may be made; occult training consists of a deliberate and continuous attempt to mould the character according to a chosen ideal, by the power of thought. I quote here from No. 4 of the free leaflets issued by the Theosophical Society, and written by Dr. Besant: [1]

THOUGHT POWER AND ITS USES

"One of the most striking features of the present day is the recognition on all hands of the power of thought, the belief that a man can mould his character, and therefore his destiny, by the exercise of this power which makes him a man. In this our modern ideas are coming into line with the religious teachings of the past. 'Man is created by thought,' was written in a Hindu Scripture. 'What a man thinks on, that he becomes; therefore think on the

[1] A complete set of these free leaflets may be had on application to the Theosophical Society, 23 Bedford Square, London, W. C. 1.

Eternal.' 'As he thinketh in his heart, so is he,' said the wise King of Israel, giving warning against association with an evil man. 'All that we are is made up of our thoughts,' said the Buddha. 'Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart,' declared the Christ.

"Thought is the parent of action; our nature sets itself to embody that which is generated by thought. Modern psychology states that the body tends to follow out the thought, and traces the inclination felt by some to throw themselves down from a height to the imagination picturing a fall, and the body acting out the picture.

"There being, then, a practically general appreciation of the power of thought, it becomes a matter of great moment to know how to use this power in the highest possible way and to the greatest possible effect. This can best be done by the practice of meditation, and one of the simplest methods—which has also the advantage that its value can be tested by each person for himself—is as follows.

"Examining your own character, you pick out some distinct defect in it. You then ask yourself, what is its exact opposite, the virtue which is its antithesis. Let us say that you suffer from irritability; you select patience. Then regularly, every morning before going out into the world, you sit down for from three to five minutes and think on patience—its value, its beauty, its practice under

provocation, taking one point one day, another another, and thinking as steadily as you can, recalling the mind when it wanders; think of yourself as perfectly patient, a model of patience, and end with a vow: 'This patience, which is my true self, I will feel and show to-day.'

"For a few days, probably, there will be no change perceptible, you will feel and show irritability. Go on steadily every morning. Presently, as you say an irritable thing, the thought will flash into your mind unbidden: 'I should have been patient.' Still go on. Soon the thought of patience will rise *with* the irritable impulse, and the outer manifestation will be checked. Still go on. The irritable impulse will grow feebler and feebler, until you find that irritability has disappeared, and that patience has become your normal attitude towards annoyances.

"Here is an experiment that anyone can try, and prove the law for himself. Once proven, he can use it, and build virtue after virtue in a similar way, until he has created an ideal character by the power of thought.

"Another use for this power is to help any good cause by sending to it good thoughts; to aid a friend in trouble by sending thoughts of comfort; a friend in search of truth by thoughts, clear and definite, of the truths you know. You can send out into the mental atmosphere thoughts which will raise, purify, inspire, all who are sensitive to them; thoughts of protection, to be guardian angels of those you love. Right thought is a continual benediction which each

can radiate, like a fountain spraying forth sweet waters.

"Yet we must not forget the reverse of this fair picture. Wrong thought is as swift for evil as is right thought for good. Thought can wound as well as heal, distress as well as comfort. Ill thoughts thrown into the mental atmosphere poison receptive minds; thoughts of anger and revenge lend strength to the murderous blow; thoughts which wrong others barb the tongue of slander, wing the arrows loosed at the unjustly assailed. The mind tenanted by evil thoughts acts as a magnet to attract like thoughts from others, and thus intensifies the original ill. To think on evil is a step towards doing evil, and a polluted imagination prompts the realization of its own foul creations . . . 'As a man thinks, so he becomes,' is the law for evil thoughts as well as for good. Moreover to dwell on an evil thought gradually deprives it of its repulsiveness, and impels the thinker to perform an action which embodies it.

"Such is the Law of Thought, such its power. 'If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.'"

We may accept the statement from so great an authority as Dr. Besant, that the effective use of thought-power is a very important subject, and one which should be studied by every aspirant to the spiritual life. The following are some of the main principles which underlie it.

Clarity and directness of thought are essentials to complete success. For example: an explosion

of indignation or wrath produces a strong temporary disturbance, but a clear-cut and definite projection of anger would produce a far deeper and more lasting effect. Clarity and directness are obtained by a combination of exact knowledge of the objective and how to reach it, and concentration in the application of that knowledge. The faculty of concentration can only be developed by continued practice and self-training.

Our object is to apply the known laws governing the use of thought-power to produce effects, the nature of which has been previously agreed upon. These effects are:

(*a*) The moulding of our character, by building into it those virtues which are embodied in our ideal of perfection.

(*b*) The radiation of power, wisdom and beauty upon the world, in order to quicken its evolution.

(*c*) The expansion of our consciousness and the liberation of the forces of the higher worlds.

This brings us to our second principle, which is that *the higher the level of consciousness employed, the greater the power released and, consequently, the greater the effect.* The potency and usefulness of an occultist depend largely upon the level of consciousness at which he is able to function.

A relatively new invention in the engineering world, which is known as the "servo" method of applying energy, may serve as an illustration of this principle. Applied to brakes, for instance, it permits the inductive suction of the engine to be

added to the pressure of the foot on the brake pedal, or of the hand on the lever, with the result that the amount of effort required to apply the brakes is far less, and the effect is much greater. The same principle seems to apply when dealing with super-physical energies, and a "servo" action is obtained by tapping the force of higher planes.

One often observes this when practising healing; the keynote of the healing energy is love—an emotion—and pure love will undoubtedly heal, but a great deal of it is needed. If compassion, which is a Buddhic force, can be added to love, the stream of healing energy will be enormously increased.

A number of people working together in perfect unity and accord can produce a far greater effect than could the same number working separately. Unity on any plane is an expression of Buddhi, so that when a number of people unite to produce a spiritual and moral result, the force of Buddhi is automatically released; unity of effort provides the channel and the mechanism, and the appropriate energy flows quite naturally, and in degree according to the measure of the unity attained. In electrical terms, one might say that Buddhic energy is induced in a "voltage" commensurate with the capacity of the instrument. That is a rather mechanical explanation of the saying attributed to Our Lord: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of

them."[1] The Lord is here regarded as the embodiment of Unity.

In addition to this fact, it appears that the natural power of, say, six people thinking upon the same subject together in one room, differs from the power of the same six people thinking separately; in the latter case you get merely arithmetical progression, and in the former, geometrical. This aspect of the subject is most important just now, both because of the new method of work which is becoming increasingly manifested in the world—that of working and living in groups and communities—and because co-operation is the keynote of the new age.

The production of definite results by thought-power does not require the creation of energy, but its release; therefore tension or strain is unnecessary, and must be avoided.

This principle is most important if we are to develop the ability to work for long periods without fatigue; unless we have a thorough grasp of it, strain will almost inevitably be set up, and the physical, astral or mental parts of the mechanism be injured. There must be intensity of effort without strain. This may sound paradoxical, but occultism presents us with a continual series of paradoxes and apparent contradictions. Many students find this so disturbing that they give up the struggle, and resign from occult Societies and Orders.

The dangers of contacting occult forces are demonstrated when such people form groups with

[1] St. Matth., 18, 20.

the object of attacking and vilifying those whom, having failed to understand, they feel called upon to criticize; such groups certainly induce an energy and draw the attention of its corresponding agents, but where there is destructive criticism, vilification and attack, it is neither the energy nor the agents of Buddhi which are attracted. I mention this because we are dealing with occult knowledge and therefore with occult power, and the responsibilities, which cannot be separated from their use, are very great indeed.

The best way to deal with both true and apparent paradoxes is to rise to the level of unity of thought—the consciousness of the ego—from which the central truth may be perceived, and its two apparently opposing facets seen as two aspects of one truth; in other words, we must meditate upon the problem until a solution is discovered; that, I may say, *en passant*, is a most valuable method of self-education.

The solution of this particular paradox lies in the fact that the intensity of effort is maintained in the higher levels of consciousness by the ego, while the personality is used as a passive channel for the force engendered; it must be passive—not negative or in the least degree externally receptive—and perfectly still and relaxed, so that the power from the higher planes may flow freely through.

Every aspirant to practical occultism should practise and make himself proficient in the art of relaxation, without which it is impossible either

to become a perfect channel, or to keep up a continuous effort without injuring both oneself and the work. With steady practice and continual self-recollection, true relaxation of every nerve and muscle—except those required for the work in hand—may be obtained; once mastered, relaxation will become a habit, and then the mind will be left free to work on its own level.

The release of the energy of any plane attracts its agents, the natural denizens of that world. The chief agents of all energy in our universe are the Devas or angels. If men and angels co-operate in using that energy, an infinitely greater result may be achieved; again to use a mechanical example—we provide the machinery, the force flows through it automatically in accordance with the laws of super-physical mechanics, and the Devas are the engineers in charge. Their attention is aroused the moment the forces of nature begin to be employed—especially those which, in this age, are regarded as occult. If the purpose behind the work is in accordance with the principles by which they live, then they readily co-operate, lending their energy and their power of intense and unwavering concentration to the production of the result required. Even in the early stages of learning to use occult forces, one frequently finds that the stream of energy, which one is trying to direct, suddenly grows in volume, power and potentiality, takes on a life of its own, and produces results far beyond the capacity of a beginner.

Investigation shows that some extra help is being given—in most cases by a Deva. This brings us right into the domain of practical occult work and into touch with the powerful sources of energy and, at the same time, lays upon us a great responsibility for the due and proper employment of that energy. For further information on this subject see my books: *The Kingdom of Faerie* and *The Brotherhood of Angels and of Men.*[1]

Joy in the heart of the worker increases the value of all work. We must radiate joy, take joy with us wherever we go and perform all work with our hearts filled with gladness. Earnestness is not a synonym for depression; we are prone to become too serious and heavy, and to be weighed down by our sense of the importance of the work and our responsibility for its proper performance. The Devas teach us a wonderful lesson in this connection. Whatever the work they do and however intent they may be upon it, they are always radiantly happy. We, too, should endeavour to bring happiness, as well as other necessary qualities, into our lives, so that it may shine through all our work and give to it a beauty and effectiveness which it would not otherwise possess.

The application of these principles will produce results with absolute certainty; the time required depends upon the intensity and determination with which they are applied. Let us assume that, having

[1] Theosophical Publishing House.

determined to apply them, we are about to begin the practice of meditation.

Where possible, it is of great assistance to have a room, or portion of a room, in the house, reserved for this purpose. It is essential to complete success that meditation should be regular, and it is advantageous to meditate at the same hour each day: the hours before noon are the most suitable for meditation, and only under most exceptional circumstances, such as group or ceremonial meetings, should it ever be engaged in, by beginners, after sunset.

The body should be seated in a comfortable and relaxed position, with the spine and head erect; the two best attitudes are generally admitted to be either cross-legged on the floor in Indian fashion, or upright upon a straight chair, the hands resting upon the knees, in the pose of the seated statues of the ancient Egyptians. An opening meditation on the subject of peace is always helpful in inducing a condition of quietness in the physical and subtler bodies, so that, like the unruffled surface of a pool, they may perfectly receive and reflect the light from above. In the words of the Psalmist: "Be still, and know that I am God;"[1] or as Madame Guyon says: "God being an Infinite Stillness, the soul, in order to be united with Him, must participate in His stillness." The advice of Jacob Boehme is worth quoting here:

"When thou standest still from thinking of self; when both thy intellect and will are quiet and passive to the Impressions of the Eternal Word and Spirit;

[1] Psalm 46, 10.

and when thy Soul is winged up, and above that which is temporal, the outward Senses, and the Imagination being locked up by holy Abstraction, then the Eternal Hearing, Seeing and Speaking will be revealed in thee ; and so God heareth and seeth through thee, and whispereth to thy Spirit, and thy Spirit heareth His Voice. Blessed art thou therefore if thou canst stand still from Self-thinking and Self-willing, and canst stop the Wheel of thy Imagination and Senses ; for as much as hereby thou mayest arrive at length to see the great Salvation of God, being made capable of all Manner of Divine Sensations and Heavenly Communications. Since it is nought indeed but thine own Hearing and Willing that do hinder thee, so that thou dost not see and hear God." [1]

There are two difficulties which may be met at this initial stage: they are the wandering of the attention, and the tendency of the mind to be distracted by visions. The first may be overcome by practice, and the second by steadily ignoring all images which appear before the mind's eye, and by resisting all external influences. Many beautiful colours and forms may appear, and presences may be felt, but we must constantly remind ourselves that our sole purpose in meditation is the expansion of the consciousness until it is freed from the dominion of form, and is merged into the One Consciousness of the Logos.

Many students mistake these mental images for heavenly visions, and the presences for celestial

[1] *The Supersensual Life.* Jacob Boehme.

visitors. Even if they were, they should still be excluded until sufficient development has been gained to enable the seer to understand his visions, and to appreciate his visitors from other worlds. With very rare exceptions, the colours and forms are either parts of the student's own aura, or the natural phenomena of the astral or mental worlds; while the visitors are usually discarnate men or women who, finding someone in a negative mood, seek to impress themselves upon him; and even if their intention is to help, their aid may not be accepted at this stage, for there is a distinct danger that the aspirant, not having developed the capacity to scrutinize his psychic guests, may throw himself open to some undesirable influences, such as that of a deceitful and mischievous nature-spirit or elemental.

We are continually being warned against these dangers by our teachers, and the path of occultism is said to be strewn with the wrecks of those who have failed. The fatal attractions of the astral cul-de-sac of psychism are responsible for a large proportion of failures.

Avoiding these errors, and having achieved a measure of quietude, fix the attention firmly upon the idea of peace, trying to conceive of that "perfect peace which passeth all understanding"; gradually, as success is achieved, serenity and calmness will descend with all their harmonizing and refreshing power.

The soul needs feeding, as does the physical body, but we are prone to neglect it; within us is a

fountain, pure and sparkling, from which we may drink daily, receiving strength and courage to face the difficulties of life and the mighty task to which we have set our hands. Whittier's hymn expresses this so beautifully that I quote it here:

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our feverish ways!
Reclothe us in our rightful mind;
In purer lives, Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs, who heard
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow Thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above.
Where Jesus knelt, to share with Thee
The Silence of Eternity,
Interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all
Our words and works that drown
The tender whisper of Thy call,
As noiseless, let Thy blessing fall
As fell Thy manna down.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease:
Take from our souls the strain and stress;
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy Peace.

Breathe through the pulses of desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, its heats expire:
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small Voice of calm.

When a condition of relaxation and peace has been induced, the subject chosen for meditation may be pursued. The following subjects and methods are suggested :

Unity. This meditation is intended to help us to realize the essential unity underlying the apparent diversity of all manifested life. One way of doing this is to begin with the members of our own family, or with one especially beloved person with whom a feeling of unity is possible, and gradually to extend the thought of unity to include a widening circle, from personal acquaintances to the inhabitants of the town, country, continent and globe, until all the peoples of the world, incarnate and discarnate, are included ; then, if we choose, we may add our animal and angel brethren. After a time it will be found possible to extend the consciousness of unity beyond the confines of this world, until a reflection may be obtained of the point of view of the Logos, who sees the whole solar system as one, nay, even of the Supreme, to whom the whole Cosmos is one. This process may be accompanied by the idea of rising in consciousness through the lower planes to the Buddhic, of which unity is the keynote.

If a strong personal devotion is felt to the Founder of a religion, or to one of the great Masters of the Wisdom, this may be used with very great benefit, especially to those temperaments for whom meditation on union with the Guru, Master, or Saviour is the shortest route : they may

find it easy to conceive of all mankind as unified and embraced within the consciousness of the Lord Buddha, the Christ, or their own Master.

The practice of drawing into the circle of unity all those who are known to be in need of any kind, and particularly those individuals or nations between whom there is discord, is valuable, for in this way, while forwarding our own progress, we may become a source of very real assistance to others.

Peace. A method, similar to that described above, may be employed using the subject of peace instead of Unity. Having first found a measure of peace within oneself, one may gradually include within it an increasing number of people, until the whole world is envisaged as being in a state of peace.

The devotee may begin with the Christ, for example, thinking of Him as the Prince of Peace, and then draw round Him the peoples and nations of the world, until all men are bathed in His perfect peace. This meditation will help the student to develop serenity of mind which, combined with the habit of physical relaxation and poise, will enable him to bear the intense strain inseparable from the early stages of the Path.

Again, great help may be rendered to individuals, as well as to nations, by including within the meditation those at variance with each other, and in whose hearts there is no peace. If we know anyone who is in need of help, who is agitated or distressed, we

can direct our meditative thought towards him, surrounding his physical, astral and mental bodies with an atmosphere of peace; he may not be aware of our activities, but gradually quiet will descend upon him, in which the light of his Higher Self may shine forth and lead him to peace. When we have become more practised in our meditation, we shall find in this way an immense field of service and a sure way of helping the world.

Love. This meditation may be carried out in the same way, and may be used to help others by filling oneself with the highest feelings of love, and drawing into the influence of it all those whom it is desired to help, at the same time radiating streams of rosy light upon them, until they glow with this colour. A Master has said: "Love is the supreme qualification, without which all others water but the sand."[1] A method of developing this "supreme qualification" and of expanding the consciousness is mentally to divide the world which we desire to help into six parts, North, South, East and West, the Zenith and the Antipodes, and then to radiate love into each of these six divisions in turn, including all manifested life, human, animal, vegetable, mineral and elemental. After we have become efficient in this exercise, we may try to send the forces into the six divisions at once; the power and value of this act will be enormously increased if, in addition to pouring out the fullest possible measure of our own love, we aspire to serve, at the same time, as a

[1] *The Masters and the Path.* C. W. Leadbeater, page 94.

channel for the love of God. As a daily practice this is of the very highest value, and it is strongly recommended to all aspirants to the higher life.

In this meditation it is useful to concentrate upon those with whom one has a difference of opinion, or with whom it is difficult to get on, to draw them close to oneself, and to pour a resistless flood of affection upon them. This might also be done whenever one meets them. Though at first the effort may be artificial, it will soon become intensely real and its action automatic, so that, if thoughts of bitterness should arise in oneself or others, waves of the rose-red of affection will flow out to dissipate them. This is a certain way of overcoming dislikes—a most necessary process for those striving to lead the occult life. The Master may want to send us to help that very person whom we dislike. It is of the utmost importance that our prejudices should not hinder His work; to avoid such a disaster, we should at once attack all our dislikes and practise sending out continually thoughts of affection and goodwill. Modifications of this method of meditation may be applied with equal value to such subjects as harmony, joy, courage, strength, compassion, equilibrium, purity and truth. Love, however, is by far the most powerful, and in its highest aspect may be said to include them all.

The student will gain much help from reading the 13th chapter of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians and substituting the word "love" for "charity," as in the Revised Version.

More intellectual methods of meditation are those in which the mind is fixed upon an idea, problem or sentence. In the case of love, such sentences as: "Perfect love casteth out fear," or "Hatred ceaseth not by hatred at any time; hatred ceaseth by love," may be taken and dwelt upon, until all the mental and spiritual nutriment has been extracted from them and the full significance of this greatest of all "ideas" is grasped. *The Bhagavad-Gītā*, *At the Feet of the Master*, *The Voice of the Silence*, *Light on the Path*, *The Imitation of Christ*, all contain subject matter for a life-time of meditation by this method. An example is given from the writings of Jacob Boehme:

"The Virtue of Love is Nothing and All, or that Nothing visible out of which All Things proceed; Its Power is through All Things; Its height is as high as God; Its Greatness is as great as God. Its Virtue is the Principle of all Principles; Its Power supports the Heavens and upholds the Earth; its Height is Higher than the Highest Heavens; and its Greatness is even greater than the very Manifestation of the Godhead in the glorious Light of the Divine Essence, as being infinitely capable of greater and greater Manifestations in all Eternity. What can I say more? Love is higher than the Highest. Love is greater than the Greatest. Yea, it is in a certain Sense greater than God; while yet in the highest Sense of all, God is Love, and Love is God. Love being the highest Principle, is the Virtue of all Virtues; from whence they all flow forth. Love

being the greatest Majesty, is the Power of all Powers, from whence they severally operate; and it is the Holy Magical Root, or Ghostly Power from whence all the Wonders of God have been wrought by the Hands of His elect Servants, in all their Generations successively. Whosoever finds it, finds Nothing in all Things."[1]

The use of the imagination is a valuable aid for certain temperaments. Scenes may be taken from the life of one of the great Founders of the world religions and visualized with as much detail as possible, including the scenery, the climate, the colour of the sky, the spiritual light, auras, sounds and actions, building an ensemble complete in every detail. Dwell particularly upon the central figure, until He becomes a living reality, a veritable Presence, and then pour out a whole-hearted love and devotion towards Him, dedicating the whole life to His service and striving to become one with Him.

Suitable scenes from the Christian Scripture, for example, are:

The Birth.

The Baptism.

The healing miracles.

The scene when the children were brought to Him, and He said: "Suffer little children to come unto Me."

The stilling of the tempest.

The entry into Jerusalem.

The Transfiguration.

[1] *The Supersensual Life.* Jacob Boehme

The Last Supper.

The Ascension.

The Crucifixion is not a suitable subject, and in all cases the student should dwell upon the living Christ, rather than upon the crucified Saviour. Gradually very powerful meditation-forms, containing strong images of the Master, will be built up in the aura, and these can be used by Him as channels for His force.

Among the many methods which may be employed to produce expansion of consciousness, one is to raise the consciousness—if only in imagination at first—through each of the planes of nature in turn, from the physical up to the highest. At each plane, an effort may be made to sense the conditions there, to turn the consciousness outwards to the plane, using the corresponding body as a vehicle. When the levels beyond the mental plane are meditated upon, a measure of their light and glory may enter the mind and illumine the understanding until, gradually, the capacity of functioning consciously in those may begin to be developed.

A further useful practice when focusing the consciousness in the different bodies is to dissociate the Self from each vehicle in turn, with the affirmation: "This is not I, it is a body which I use." The faculty of doing this is often of great help in striving for mastery over the inclinations of the bodies, and in acquiring the valuable and necessary quality of detachment.

Another method is that of dwelling in thought upon that which, relatively to our consciousness, is formless, and trying to conceive of existence unconditioned by form. Examples of such subjects are:

The Lord of the World.
The Planetary Logos.
The Logos of the Solar System.
The One Life.
The Self of the Universe.
The Divine Immanence.
The Presence of God.
The Supreme: The causeless Cause, or Absolute.

After reading all that is available upon these subjects, they may be used for meditation. The consciousness should be raised to the highest level attainable, and then be made to reach outwards and upwards, and to stretch to its utmost limits in an endeavour to touch and to understand the particular subject chosen, and to lose itself within it; in all cases the object of the meditation should be to unify ourselves with That towards which we strive.

There are certain prayers expressing ideas of great power, which form suitable subjects for meditation. The Lord's Prayer from the Christian religion is perhaps one of the finest examples, and if uttered with powerful intent and concentrated mind, will produce both expansion of the higher consciousness and illumination of the mind. Like the Rosicrucian prayer quoted below, it is an occult

and inspired composition and is capable of at least seven different interpretations, each of which will reveal a new aspect of the wisdom and power concealed within it. From the point of view of meditation it may be regarded as an invocation to the Higher Self—the Father which is in heaven—to descend into and assume the rulership and guidance of the personality, which is offered to it unreservedly for ever and ever.

A similar prayer which has often proved to be an aid to upliftment and serenity when other means have failed is given below. I used it and gained great help from it during the period of active service in the late war when ordinary meditation was well nigh impossible. It is said to be of Rosicrucian origin.

" Universal God, One Light, One Life, One Power,
Thou all in all, beyond expression, beyond comprehension ;
O Nature, Thou something from nothing, Thou symbol of Wisdom !
In myself, I am nothing ;
In Thee, I am I.
I, made of nothing, live in Thee,
Live Thou in me,
And lift me out of the region of self
Into the Eternal Light. Amen."

The following prayer also has great power and beauty : " Unveil, Thou that supportest the Universe, from whom all comes forth, to whom all returns, that face of the True Sun now hidden by a vase of golden light, that we may know the truth and do our

whole duty on our journey towards Thy sacred seat."

In Christian countries the idea has grown up that prayers must be *said*; the deeper significance of a prayer, however, will always be more easily realized if it is repeated mentally only, and *meditated upon*. Furthermore, the downpouring of power and blessing which occurs when a true prayer is uttered, will be far more easily received and assimilated if the mind is withdrawn from all physical activity and the body is perfectly still.

Before praying we should tranquillize the mind and so prepare it to receive the answer to our prayer; then, fixing the mind upon God, or upon a member of the Communion of Saints, repeat the words of the prayer mentally and use them as a means of attaining union with the object of worship.

If the prayer has been effective—and that depends upon the suppliant alone—the soul will be lifted up on the wings of adoration and drawn nearer and nearer to the heart of God.

The summit of a hill or, better still, a mountain top[1] is a wonderful place in which to pray; the view of a beautiful countryside or of range upon range of mountains, seen from a height, calls forth a natural worship of the wonder and beauty of God as revealed in the varied charms of nature in land and sea and sky. We may take advantage of these conditions to lift ourselves up close to the heart of Him, "Whose beauty shines through the whole

[1] See *Nirvana*, by the Rt. Rev. G. S. Arundale.

universe," to unfold the wings of the soul, and make the "flight of the alone to the Alone." There we may pour out our love and worship to Him with all the power of our being, and learn to be channels in our turn for His Love and Blessing to the world.

I close this description of some suitable subjects and methods for meditation with one of the most wonderful of all, that known as the Five Meditations of the Buddha.

Said the disciple: "Teach me, O Lord, the meditations to which I must devote myself in order to let my mind enter into the paradise of the pure land."

Buddha said: "There are five meditations.

"The first meditation is the meditation of love, in which thou must so adjust thy heart that thou longest for the weal and welfare of all beings, including the happiness of thy enemies.

"The second meditation is the meditation of pity, in which thou thinkest of all beings in distress, vividly representing in thine imagination their sorrows and anxieties so as to arouse a deep compassion for them in thy soul.

"The third meditation is the meditation of joy, in which thou thinkest of the prosperity of others and rejoicest with their rejoicings.

"The fourth meditation is the meditation on impurity, in which thou considerest the evil consequences of corruption, the effects of wrongs and evils; how trivial is often the pleasure of the moment and how fatal are its consequences.

"The fifth meditation is the meditation on serenity, in which thou risest above love and hate, tyranny and thraldom, wealth and want, and regardest thine own fate with impartial calmness and perfect tranquillity.

"A true follower of the Tathāgata founds not his trust upon austerities or rituals, but giving up the idea of self, relies with his whole heart upon Amitābha, which is the unbounded light of truth."[1]

With these examples to help him, the student may quickly develop variations of his own, until he finds the particular type of meditation suited to his temperament.

After meditation, we should return gradually to normal waking consciousness, and so give the physical body time to assimilate the forces which have been released. We should try to retain the peaceful and elevated mood of meditation as long as possible, gradually extending it until it eventually becomes continuous. The true secret of success lies in training the mind so that the moment it is released from any physical effort, it automatically returns to a state of meditation; the would-be disciple must learn to live continually in the presence of the Master, while at the same time maintaining his full physical efficiency.

If, during meditation, we should ever experience any pain in the head, we should stop immediately; such pain is a sign of strain and is a warning that we should rest. The body should be carefully

[1] *The Gospel of the Buddha*, Paul Carus, pp. 174-5.

watched at the commencement of the next meditation, and the line of this unconscious strain traced and eliminated.

Much help will be gained from the establishment of a routine in meditation, such as learning a verse at night, meditating upon it the next morning, and striving to express its truth and power throughout the daily life; at midday, performing an act of recollection; and in the evening, reviewing the day in the light of the chosen ideal, noting the errors and failures, and deciding that they shall not occur again. Then the new sentence for the morrow should be learnt, after which one may surrender oneself to God in sleep, with an undercurrent of aspiration to serve Him when out of the body. The book *Daily Meditations on At the Feet of the Master*, by A Server,[1] is especially recommended for beginners.

As previously advised, these practices should be performed regularly and, if possible, always at the same time of day, taking advantage of the law of rhythm and setting up natural tendencies to meditative thought in all the bodies; resistance is thus reduced to a minimum.

The result is certain, for the whole process is governed by exact law; the length of time required before it is achieved is a question of past Karma and present intensity of effort.

Whole-hearted aspiration on our part towards the highest we know, produces a glowing light

[1] Theosophical Publishing House.

about us which shines with increasing brightness as we keep its flame alive in our hearts. The Masters of Wisdom looking down upon mankind, which lies asleep in darkness, see this light and send Their strength and blessing upon us; soon, then, may come the great day when, like the disciples of old, we shall hear our Master's voice saying: "Follow Me."

Then the joyful life of Discipleship will begin, the life which is the only one worth living, in comparison with which the ordinary life of the world is as death.

* * * * *

Before leaving the subject of meditation the attention of the student may be drawn to the value of group-meditation. We found on pp. 15, 16 that more power is generated by group than by individual meditation. We may take advantage of the operation of that natural law to reach levels of consciousness normally outside of our range and to produce results more far-reaching than we could hope to produce by ourselves.

Group-meditation may be used as a most valuable means of contacting the higher levels of consciousness and of the radiating power and blessing upon the world.

Let us examine some possible sources of power and the ways in which it may be contacted and released.

There are two directions to which we can turn in seeking for power: we may look inwards, to the

centre of our own life, or outwards, to some exalted Being so evolved that the power within Him is for ever pouring forth for the helping of the world.

Our knowledge of the constitution of man is our surest guide in the first-mentioned direction. We know that, as sparks of the divine flame, we are in direct contact with the inexhaustible reservoir of power of which the Logos of our system is the expression, and that He, in His turn, is in touch with a still greater source which is the universal supply of power for many systems; and so on and on, until we approach that unthinkable state—absolute power. Between absolute power and man on any planet there is an unbroken connection: the links in the chain of reservoirs, or, in "wireless" terms, the receiving and transmitting stations, are so devised that the voltage is reduced, step by step, as it passes through the transformers of nature, from the absolute source to the ultimate expression.

If we would switch on the power we must study the mechanism until we become familiar with every part. In terms of water-power, we may think of a reservoir high up amongst the mountains, connected to the plains by a series of smaller reservoirs through which the water flows, passing through canals and locks in its descent and finally irrigating the fields below.

In wireless terms, we may conceive of a vast central generating and transmitting station, in inter-universal space, which is the ultimate source of a boundless and inexhaustible power, that is continually being

transmitted throughout the universe and as continually renewed. It is transmitted in three wave lengths, to which have been given the names "creation," "preservation" and "destruction". On these three themes the central station broadcasts a continuous series of essays or sermons, of which no two are the same—each is complete in itself and expresses an aspect of truth. The eternal succession of broadcast essays results in an ever more perfect and complete expression, in terms of time and space, of the absolute and eternal verity.

A symphonic concert is being continually broadcast from this central station throughout the whole universe. The three motifs, upon which the unbroken and unbreakable series of symphonies is composed, are "creation," "preservation" and "destruction," and upon those themes the universal Musician continually enlarges. As He plays He transmits. Vast choirs of angels serve Him as orchestra and chorus, countless myriads of beings—human and non-human—serve Him as instruments through which His breath may flow, as pipes in the vast organ upon whose keyboard He plays His triple-motived symphonies throughout all eternity.

To know what means we have of tapping the universal energy we must first be clear as to where we stand. The internal series of locks, stations or transformers, from man to the Absolute, are according to Theosophy:

Personality.
Ego.

Monad.
Logos of a System.
Universal Logos.

Each of these is triple, so that we have:

Personality	Mental.
	Astral.
	Physical.
Ego	Will.
	Wisdom.
	Intellect.
Monad	Atma.
	Buddhi.
	Manas.
Logos	Creator.
	Preserver.
	Destroyer.
Universal Logos	Eternal Creation.
	Eternal Preservation.
	Eternal Destruction.

Let us place these series of triplicates in diagrammatic relationship and see the various circuits along which power flows.

ETERNITY
THE UNIVERSAL LOGOS
(CENTRAL TRANSMITTING STATION)
ETERNAL CREATION
ETERNAL PRESERVATION
ETERNAL DESTRUCTION
A LOGOS OF A SYSTEM
DURATION
CREATION
PRESERVATION
DESTRUCTION
A MONAD
ATMA
BUDDHI
MANAS
AN EGO
WILL
WISDOM
INTELLECT
A PERSONALITY
TIME AND SPACE
PHYSICAL
ASTRAL
MENTAL

A glimpse of the splendour of the system may be gained by meditation along these lines and by the thought that there are unknown multitudes of beings in existence, and every single one is in direct contact with the central source by a system similar to that expressed in the diagram. Presumably there must be an infinite number of Logoi, of Monads, egos, personalities and group-souls, each expressing power through myriads of forms.

When we look for power outside ourselves we turn first of all to the Great White Brotherhood. This is a synthesis of many streams of force: the power of each individual member, the power behind each of the great offices in the Hierarchy, the reservoir of power by means of which each of the world-religions is supported and nourished during the absence of its Founder from the physical plane. The other outside source is the power of the angelic hierarchy. Let us briefly consider these in their turn.

Every one who has been officially accepted into any of the great religions of the world, by the prescribed ceremonial, has a direct link with its Founder. While it is true that in many cases this link remains unused, it is also true that it can be vivified and employed as a means of contact both with the World-Teacher and with the reservoir of power, established by Him for the support of that particular religion throughout the centuries of its existence after His physical presence had been withdrawn.

Every Christian, Buddhist, Parsee or Hindu, for example, has been given the right to invoke these mighty forces with absolute assurance of an unfailing response. The descent of the power will be in direct proportion to the degree in which his religion is to him a living reality, and to his capacity to serve as a channel for distributing its power to the world. Every member of the Theosophical Society, for example, has a similar link with the members of the Great White Brotherhood and can draw upon Their power. A Master has said: "When a man joins the Theosophical Society I look at him"; that "look" means far more than a physical or even occult glance; it means that every F.T.S. is included within the consciousness of the Master, is known by Him, and has a magnetic link with Him which need never be broken, but which may grow by use until it becomes the living union between Master and disciple.

All Masons have a similar link with the "Venerable Master of the Wisdom who is the Head of all true Freemasons throughout the world"—the mighty Chohan, Prince Rakoczy: and each can draw upon His power and upon the reservoir of Masonic power on this planet.

The Great World-Teacher may be reached by at least three different and distinct channels: one is the link through membership of a world-religion, one through membership of "His Order of the Star," the third and most direct link is that of man's own innermost nature (Buddhi), the Christ-principle

within him—whether it be still asleep, born as a babe, or beginning to shine forth "in the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ".

By these close contacts, which the Great Ones in Their divine compassion make with Their younger brethren, a means is given to us not of contacting Their power only but also that of the Logos, which is so marvellously manifested in and through Them.

In a similar way the power of the Deva hierarchy can be contacted and drawn upon by anyone who will fulfil the necessary conditions. I have not the space to deal with this subject here at all fully, but would refer those of my readers who are interested to my book, *The Brotherhood of Angels and of Men.*[1] It is sufficient to say that the great orders of the angels stand ready to assist us in all our undertakings, provided that they are in accordance with the Great Plan. The power of the Lady Mary and Her hosts of angel-servers is ready to be freely poured out in all work for the upliftment of the womanhood of the world and the exaltation of the ideals of love, marriage and parenthood; that of the Archangel Raphael and His hosts for all work of healing; that of the Archangel Michael for all work in which resistless floods of power are required.

As our knowledge of this subject grows, we shall learn to co-operate more and more fully with the angelic hierarchy and in that co-operation we shall see the dawning of a fairer day on mother earth—a day in which the culture and sense of duty of ancient

[1] Theosophical Publishing House.

India, the knowledge and power of Egypt, the purity and occult love of Chaldea, the beauty of Greece and the love and self-sacrifice taught in Palestine shall be united in a glorious synthesis of all that was best from the past and all that is most beautiful that has been developed since those great civilizations passed away. And on that day angels shall once more walk with men.

Having traced to their source some of the various powers which are at our disposal, let us see how we can contact and release them in the service of the world.

That one great means of contacting and releasing these various sources of energy is by meditation. By meditation alone can we raise our consciousness to those levels at which these hidden energies are stored. The first essential, therefore, is that, individually and in groups, we should practise the science of prayer and meditation and tap the interior sources of power. The connections between the personality and the ego, the Monad and the Logos, each form a core within a core of the human cable which conveys power to the physical world.

We may raise our consciousness, plane by plane, in order to contact the higher levels and serve as channels for this power. Or we may meditate, first, upon someone we know who is in direct contact with a particular source of power, and pass through him to a sense of living unity with the power and that greater one behind him—reaching up through the various levels of the Great White

Brotherhood, from the Initiate in the outer world to the Adept who is his Master, then to the corresponding official at the Mahachohan level, and then to the Lord Buddha, and so onwards and upwards to the Mighty Lord of the World, the King Himself.

Some reflection of the power and glory of those lofty levels and of the Mighty Ones who dwell there may be attained by such methods of meditation. We can then practise drawing down the power to the material worlds and radiating it forth for the upliftment and salvation of those who live there in slavery, so that they may be shown the way to freedom.

We may invoke the power of the angels by dwelling continually upon them in thought and calling upon them, with concentrated mind and will, to share in the activities upon which we are engaged. The resultant downpouring of spiritual energy may be directed forth upon the world by each one of us, working either individually or in groups.

In our private devotions we may will that the inward power shall descend upon us, passing through our heads and into our hearts; and then having opened our hearts to the sorrows and sufferings of the world we may, by a powerful act of will, release the mighty energy we have invoked so that they may thereby be healed and relieved.

The angels may be called to bear the power, to make pathways for it through the resistance

which the materialism of the age has produced, and to take upon themselves the task of producing the maximum effect with such power as we place at their disposal.

The daily practice of radiating the powers of love and compassion upon the world is strongly recommended to all those who would become adept at this work. If we steadfastly persist in it our whole nature will be changed, our hearts will open, and we shall gradually become effective channels for the beneficent powers of those more advanced than ourselves and for the forces of the higher worlds.

As groups, meeting regularly, we can do far greater work than is possible to each of us as an individual. I suggest that, wherever there is a number of students living near together, they should meet regularly, day by day, for the purpose of radiating power upon their district. By this means they could prepare their lecture-rooms for public meetings by producing an atmosphere of upliftment and power, they could attack all the social problems of their locality and could even send forth powerful currents of force for the improvement of both national and international situations. Where Lodges exist in our large cities a continual stream of power could be deliberately poured into the slum areas, or into particular parts of the town or city where vice and evil predominate.

A few hints as to the procedure to be followed by such a group may be welcomed. The members should

sit in a circle, and after having ensured entire freedom from interruption, they should relax their bodies and free their minds from all the personal problems and daily difficulties of their lives. Then they should make an effort to realize the unity of the group, to rise above all sense of separateness and personality until the group is established as a single living organism, one instrument, which is offered for the service of the Masters and of the world. After this the group-consciousness might be raised plane by plane—if only in imagination at first—through the lower levels up to the causal, Buddhic and Atmic worlds. Then a sentence might be meditated upon, such as: "Where two or three are gathered together in My name there am I in the midst of them." The group should then try to realize the living presence of the Christ and strive to "touch the hem of His garment," which means both to touch the fringe of His consciousness and to realize the Christ-principle within them.

Then visualizing this love and power as descending into their midst, invoking the aid of the angels and using all the will-power they possess, the group should project the resultant force in a mighty flood out upon the world, willing that all darkness and evil should melt away before its resistless power. This force may be projected in a special direction or upon a certain area, or it may be radiated in an ever-widening circle so that it flows as a flood of living light, wave upon wave, out over the whole world.

With regular practice such a group would quickly become adept at this work and, by so doing, they would be helping the world in a most vital and fundamental manner. They would be taking their share in the great battle of light against darkness, and so would begin to be able to lift some of the weight from the shoulders of Those who are the Guardians and Saviours of humanity.

Many results might be expected from these practices. The mental and psychic atmosphere of the neighbourhood and even of the world would be changed, the group itself would become increasingly vital and powerful, and the members of it would find themselves becoming more useful and efficient and enlightened in all their work; the sense of the reality of the inner worlds—of the existence of the Great Ones and of the angels—would be greatly increased, until gradually each one would begin to feel that he had the power at his disposal which would make him a really effective agent of the Masters of the Wisdom.

The ideal qualities which those should possess, who would engage effectively in this work, are impersonality, a sense of self-consecration to the service of the world, purity of life, health and cleanliness of body and singleness of purpose. Given these and a sound knowledge of the power and use of thought with a complete trust in the Masters, and hearts filled with compassion and longing to heal the sorrows and sufferings of the world, then immediate and clearly discernible results might be expected from a

steady and continuous radiation of power and love along the lines that I have suggested.

If all serious-minded people would make use along these lines of the knowledge and power which is at their disposal, they would not only prove themselves worthy of the great gifts of knowledge, now being received, they would also rapidly change the face of the earth and the fate of all the many forms of life which dwell thereon.

CHAPTER II

"Behold the Truth before you: A clean life, an open mind, a pure heart, an eager intellect, an unveiled spiritual perception, a brotherliness for one's co-disciple, a readiness to give and receive advice and instruction, a loyal sense of duty to the Teacher, a willing obedience to the behests of Truth, once we have placed our confidence in, and believe that Teacher to be in possession of it; a courageous endurance of personal injustice, a brave declaration of principles, a valiant defence of those who are unjustly attacked and a constant eye to the ideal of human progression and perfection, which the secret science (Gupta Vidya) depicts; these are the golden stairs up the steps of which the learner may climb to the Temple of Divine Wisdom.—H. P. BLAVATSKY.

THE PATH

Arise, seek out the great Teachers, and attend.

WHEN we begin to make the effort to find the Path and to tread it, a resistance is at once set up not only from within ourselves, but also from our environment, and even from our family, who frequently misunderstand us. Then arises a difficult problem, the solution of which calls for wise discrimination. Shall we observe our obligations to our friends and relations by remaining with them and living as they live, or shall we fulfil to the letter the obligations which seem to be implied by our newly-found ideals? Neither of these considerations can be lightly rejected, yet they are frequently conflicting. We may consider that the duties to parents, to children and to the home must come first, and we may seek to tread the Path by unselfish service and devotion to them; or, on the other hand, we may feel the call to leave home, family and environment, and to break with all the old associations. Happy are they who find the third, the middle way, by which they are able to combine both ideals; who, while studying, meditating and serving—the great trinity of essentials—may shed the radiance of their inner life upon those who immediately surround them. Whatever our decision

may be, we must refrain from alienating people by a crude display of our opinions and try to live so nobly that they shall think our beliefs and our ideals worthy, if not of inquiry and study, at least of respect.

However great our initial difficulties may be, we may take heart from the sure knowledge that every one who finds the Path must overcome these or similar obstacles, and that our efforts and our success make it easier for those who follow after; as the successful seekers for the hidden treasures of the spiritual life are few in proportion to the millions of mankind, they resemble pioneers and explorers who blaze a trail through the jungle and, clearing away the undergrowth, make better travelling for others. Humanity is one great family, one spiritual entity, and every forward step taken by an individual uplifts the whole.

With this knowledge as his sole motive and source of inspiration, the neophyte gradually reaches a state of mind in which the only course possible to him is to find the Path, and to tread it life after life, until the goal is reached. As mentioned at the end of the last chapter, he is then observed by a member of the Occult Hierarchy, generally by the Master of his Ray, whose force, from that time, plays upon him continually; He arranges for the beginner to come into contact with others in whom He is interested, and who can help him with their wider experience and guide his feet in the early stages of his great adventure.

The Path towards Discipleship and Initiation is an adventure, and it demands the same sense of joyous anticipation, courage and intense application which explorers develop in following their arduous calling. As the explorer is concerned with the surmounting of physical difficulties, with climbing heights from which unknown regions may be surveyed, so the neophyte must conquer the weaknesses of his own nature, must climb spiritual Everests and learn to survey, from the inner heights achieved, the new and unknown regions of the super-physical worlds; one can well believe that when great explorers begin to turn their indomitable will towards treading the Path of Discipleship, their progress will indeed be swift and sure. The following extracts, from General Bruce's book on the last Everest expedition and from Commander Peary's book on the North Pole, are interesting when applied to attempts to climb the mountains of the spiritual worlds.

"The type of climber who should go farthest on Mt. Everest would appear to be similar to that which best suits the Alps. Of the physical attributes necessary, the following points, in addition to what is usually termed physical fitness, may be emphasized. In the rarefied atmosphere of high altitudes, the larger the vital capacity the better. By the term 'vital capacity' is meant the maximum amount of air an individual is able to expel from the lungs by voluntary effort, after taking the deepest possible inspiration.

"Perhaps more important than perfect physical fitness to the would-be conqueror of Everest, is the possession of the correct mentality. Absolutely essential are *singleness of aim, namely the attainment of the summit, and unswerving faith in the possibility of achievement; half-heartedness in even one member of the attacking party, spells almost certain failure.* Many a strong party in the Alps has failed to reach its objective through the depressing effect of the presence of one doubting Thomas. *Like an insidious disease, a wavering, infirm belief is liable to spread, and cause the destruction of the hopes of those who come into contact with it.*

"The man who cannot face Mt. Everest without, at the same time, proclaiming that the mountain has the odds in its favour, will do better, by himself and others, to leave the proposition severely alone.

"Of almost equal importance is the possession of what may be called *mental energy or will-power, or simply 'go'.* Mountaineers may be divided into two classes according to their behaviour when, tired out and well-nigh exhausted, they are called upon to make yet one more supreme effort. There are those who, lacking the will-power necessary to force their jaded bodies on to still further action, give in; *others, possessed of an almost inexhaustible fund of mental energy, will rise to the occasion, not once, but time and again.*

"Physical pain is the safety-valve which nature has provided to prevent harm being done to the body by exhaustion. But nature's margin of safety is a wide

one. On Everest, this margin must be narrowed down, if necessary to vanishing point, *and this can only be done by the climber whose fund of mental energy is sufficient to drive his body on and on, no matter how intense the pains of exhaustion, even to destruction, if need be.*"[1]

The attitude of Commander Peary towards his great purpose of reaching the North Pole would also appear to be just that which we should have towards the Path and the Goal. The first thing he did after waking from the sleep, which was so necessary after the final successful effort to reach the Pole, was to write in his diary:

"The Pole at last. The prize of three centuries, *my dream and goal for twenty years.* Mine at last. I cannot bring myself to realize it. It seems all so simple and commonplace.

"If it were possible for a man to arrive at 90° North latitude without being utterly exhausted in body and brain, he would doubtless enjoy a series of unique sensations and reflections. But the attainment of the Pole was the culmination of days and weeks of forced marches, physical discomfort, insufficient sleep and racking anxiety. It is a wise provision of nature that the human consciousness can grasp only such degrees of intense feeling as the brain can endure, and the grim guardians of earth's remotest spot will accept no man as guest until he has

[1] *The Assault on Mt. Everest*, 1922, by Brigadier-General the Hon. C. G. Bruce, G. C. B., M. V. O., and other members of the Expedition. (The italics are mine.—G. H.)

been tried and tested by the severest ordeal . . . *For more than a score of years that point of the earth's surface had been the object of my every effort; to attain it, my whole being, physical, mental aud moral had been dedicated.* Many times my own life and the lives of those with me had been risked. My own material and forces, and those of my friends, had been devoted to this object.

"This journey was my eighth into the Arctic wilderness. In that wilderness I had spent nearly twelve years out of the twenty-three, between my thirtieth and my fifty-third year, and the intervening time spent in civilized communities during that period had been mainly occupied with preparations for returning to the wilderness.

"*The determination to reach the Pole had become so much a part of my being that, strange as it may seem, I long ago ceased to think of myself, save as an instrument for the attainment of that end.*"

When out of danger, on the way back, he wrote this in his diary:

"My life-work is accomplished. The thing which it was intended from the beginning that I should do, the thing which I believed could be done, and that I could do, I have done. I have got the North Pole out of my system after twenty-three years of effort, hard work, disappointment, hardships, privation, more or less suffering and some risks."

Finally, Peary says:

" The victory was due to experience, to the courage, endeavour and devotion of the members of the expedition, who put all there was in them into the work." [1]

An athlete, when training for a race, prepares for months beforehand; he hardens his muscles by daily exercise, he pays the strictest attention to his diet and foregoes every indulgence which would prevent him from bringing all his physical powers to their highest culmination; on the day of the race, he faces the starter in perfect condition, stripped of every superfluous ounce of clothing and of flesh.

Spiritual achievements demand the same intensive training of mind, emotions and physical body; we, too, must become one-pointed, and strip ourselves of every impediment, whether physical, emotional or mental, which could delay our progress on the Path. This means that nothing must stand in the way of our self-discipline, of our daily meditation and of our effort to build virtue after virtue into our character.

We must carry out literally the instructions which have been given us by those wiser in these matters than ourselves. Bishop Leadbeater says in one of his books: " Students do not realize that when talking about occultism we mean exactly what we say." He probably said that because we are so prone to interpret what we read or hear in terms

[1] *The North Pole*, by Robert E. Peary. (The italics are mine.—G.H.)

of our own consciousness, that it is liable to be twisted out of all recognition. He wishes us to understand that when a teacher of occultism makes a statement he means literally what he says, no more and no less; the difficulty lies in realizing that fact and in translating the teaching from the realm of theory into actual practice. We all have the same difficulty, we know all the principles needed to make us perfect followers of the Masters, yet we constantly fail to put them into practice in our daily lives.

Perhaps one of the reasons for this is the church training which many of us had in our youth, which tended to separate things religious from things secular. In occultism this is not permitted; all day long our whole attitude must be religious; we cannot, any more, divorce our week-day from our Sunday lives. If, at the end of our lives, we hope to look back and not be filled with vain regrets, we must learn *now* to achieve the actual expression, day by day and hour by hour, of the truths we know in theory.

In such a book as *At the Feet of the Master* we may find all the guidance and instruction necessary to take us along the early stages of the Path and up to the First Initiation, if we will take each suggestion and make it a living truth in our life. The tendency to gossip, for example, is a failing which every aspirant should face and eliminate in himself. There is something peculiar in our temperaments which makes us prone to discuss our fellows and to become personal in our discussion.

Any kind of discussion of another person's private life and affairs in his absence is gossip; and if we are really in earnest, in wishing to live the life which will lead us to the feet of the Master, we should make a strong resolution to refrain from gossip.

Worry is another failing for which there is no room in the life of the spiritual man. Life to-day is very difficult for many, and the strain of earning one's living is often so severe that anxiety is inevitable; but we must remember that worry is only one step removed from depression, and depression may lead to despair, and that despair is a denial of the wisdom of God in the management of the Universe. Every time we worry we break one of the commandments of the spiritual life; if we remember this, we may find strength to throw off depression and to refrain from worry.

Purity of life and thought is of the utmost importance to the neophyte. Impurity is not only a barrier to progress, but becomes a positive danger when the higher forces of the body begin to be aroused. Those hidden energies lie sleeping in the man who has not yet awakened to the knowledge of his own divinity, and therefore his indulgence in sensual pleasures does him relatively little harm. But when the occult forces of the body are evoked by meditation, they enter into and intensify every mental, emotional and physical activity. Abuse of the creative force, for example, under such conditions is dangerous in the extreme, for the inner

fire will intensify the desires, and make it almost impossible to resist them.

The ideal of spotless purity must be accepted by the aspirant; he must live a stainless life and free himself from the dominion of desire. When this is achieved the astral body, to clairvoyant sight, appears freed from the lurid reds, dull browns and heavy greens of sensuality and selfishness; it has become white and radiant, like virgin snow under the bright rays of the sun.

There are schools of thought which teach that psychic powers and even spiritual development may be gained without the necessity for chastity and self-control. But let him who would approach the feet of the Saviours of the World be absolutely assured that no such doctrine is admitted by Their followers. Hear what *The Voice of the Silence* says:

"Eternal life's pure waters, clear and crystal, with the monsoon tempest's muddy torrents cannot mingle.

"Heaven's dew-drop glittering in the morn's first sunbeam within the bosom of the lotus, when dropped on earth becomes a piece of clay; behold, the pearl is now a speck of mire.

"Strive with thy thoughts unclean before they overpower thee. Use them as they will use thee, for if thou sparest them and they take root and grow, know well, these thoughts will overpower and kill thee. Beware, disciple, suffer not e'en though it be their shadow to approach. For it will grow, increase in size and power, and then this thing of darkness

will absorb thy being before thou hast well realized the black foul monster's presence.

"Before the mystic power can make of thee a God, Lanoo, thou must have gained the faculty to slay thy lunar form at will.

"The self of matter and the self of spirit can never meet. One of the twain must disappear; there is no place for both.

"Ere thy soul's mind can understand, the bud of personality must be crushed out, the worm of sense destroyed past resurrection. . . .

"There is but one road to the Path; at its very end alone the Voice of the Silence can be heard. The ladder by which the candidate ascends is formed of rungs of suffering and pain; these can be silenced only by the voice of virtue. Woe then to thee, disciple, if there is one single vice thou hast not left behind; for then the ladder will give way and overthrow thee; its foot rests in the deep mire of thy sins and failings, and ere thou canst attempt to cross this wide abyss of matter, thou hast to lave thy feet in waters of renunciation. Beware lest thou shouldst set a foot still soiled upon the ladder's lowest rung. Woe unto him who dares pollute one rung with miry feet. The foul and viscous mud will dry, become tenacious, then glue his feet unto the spot, and, like a bird caught in the wily fowler's line, he will be stayed from further progress. His vices will take shape and drag him down. His sins will raise their voices like as the jackal's laugh and sob after the sun goes down; his thoughts

become an army, and bear him off, a captive slave. . . .

"Long and weary is the way before thee, O disciple. One single thought about the past that thou hast left behind will drag thee down and thou wilt have to start the climb anew.

"Kill in thyself all memory of past experience. Look not behind or thou art lost.

"*Do not believe that lust can ever be killed out if gratified or satisfied, for this is an abomination inspired by Mara.*[1] It is by feeding vice that it expands and waxes strong, like to the worm that fattens on the blossom's heart.

"The rose must re-become the bud, born of its parent stem before the parasite has eaten through its heart and drunk its life-sap.

"The golden tree puts forth its jewel-buds before its trunk is withered by the storm.

"The pupil must regain the child-state he has lost ere the first sound can fall upon his ear."

There is a certain peculiarity of the human mind which, in a man who is confronted with a law of nature, causes him to assume that he is an exception to the rule, and to say to himself: "Such conditions may bind other people, but they do not apply to me"; and forthwith he proceeds to contravene them and is filled with surprise when their inviolability is demonstrated to him with painful directness. Though there may be exceptions which prove some rules, to

[1] Drawing attention to this fundamental statement in order to combat a prevalent misconception. (Italics are mine —G.H.)

the laws of the spiritual life and of Karma there are none, and every one who would live that life and release the Divinity, which is his deepest Self, must obey them, both in the letter and in the spirit.

As the rising creative energies are a source of temptation, difficulty and perplexity to many, I repeat here what is said in *An Occult View of Health and Disease*:

"In my opinion, repression alone is not only the wrong method of self-purification, but also may be followed by serious astral and physical results.

"The creative power is a mighty force, a reflection in man of the creative power of the Logos, and can be dealt with in one of three ways: it may be expressed in normal or abnormal ways; it may be repressed; or it may be transmuted and sublimated.

"If expressed in normal and legitimate ways, it will not affect the health. If repressed, without any attempt to transmute, it will affect the health in time. If sublimated, it will supply a mighty and potent force to the individual which will increase his power of service to an almost limitless degree, and will provide him with one of the means whereby he may enter upon the Path and find his way to Adeptship.

"The student must be perfectly sure that he is ready for the attempt, and is prepared to forego the ordinary happiness of the man of the world, for those of the occult life. This decision must be wholehearted and unshakable; half-measures or an indecisive attitude will result in failure, if not in

disaster. The ideal of perfect purity must be built into his consciousness and made the supreme purpose of his endeavours. He must exercise a rigid and continual control over both mind and emotions, until a tendency towards celibacy, and away from physical generation, is definitely established—then he has a fair chance of succeeding in the difficult task of sublimation.

"If the surging creative energy in man is to be sublimated, it must be turned upwards. This appears to me to be the key to the whole problem. The force, which may be regarded as centred in the Muladhara chakram,[1] must play straight up the spine and out at the top of the head.

"Definite meditation must be undertaken and steadily persevered in, with the object of using the will to draw all force away from the creative organs, and to drive it up the spinal column. Further, whenever the creative urge is felt, the will must be immediately and instantly applied in the direction suggested. This must be kept up, with unflinching determination, until the natural direction of the flow is upwards instead of downwards, after which it will come more and more within the conscious control of the will, and will begin to be used for the purposes of occult work and development."

An angel recently made the following suggestions concerning the use of the power of water and fire in self-purification:

[1] See *The Etheric Double*, by Col. A. E. Powell.

" Water represents primordial space, the condition which is ever fresh and young and new. It is the power of the surging life-force in the universe; it finds expression in the rivers and the seas, in lakes and mountain-springs, in ice and snow, in gentle summer rains, in early morning dew; the rainbow is the message of the water-angels, written in the sky for men to read. The power behind your earthly water gives the energy to rising sap, the life to flowing blood; every cell in plant, animal and man is 'watered,' irrigated and refreshed by the self-same power which fills primordial space. Water represents the ever-flowing stream of life, the liquid state, the flux and re-flux of all tides, the very pulse of the universe.

" Meditate on all that water means, plunge deep to find the solution of the problem of the liquid state, for therein lies a mystery, which existed before time began. If you can but master the meaning of the change from solid to liquid, knowledge and power will be yours; that subtle change is governed by a law, called the law of the liquid state. It is the intermediate condition through which matter and consciousness must pass ere it can be spiritualized and function in its positive capacity; that liquid state was known to alchemists, who discovered that the baser metals and the baser thoughts may be transmuted into gold if they can but be liquefied.

" Apply this theory to character and to disease. It is the fixed condition of a vice which gives it power. By its existence in the 'solid' state it gains a hold.

To extract its energy and express it as a virtue is the object of the alchemy of spirit, but first it must be liquefied. Take viciousness, emotional excitement and sensual desire as examples: each time that they are gratified they harden and gain a closer grip upon the soul. Each time that lust is given life by indulgence of the flesh, it grows, until at last it clings, an obscene entity battening upon the soul; it continually exerts an energy, which tempts the body and mind with lustful thought, fretting and distressing them with continual desire; it may be removed by the application of the principle of liquefaction. Each time its head is raised in clamorous demand, invoke the aid of water, and *will* that a cleansing flood shall flow through the mind, the feelings and the body, till they are saturated through and through. The burning fires of desire will be extinguished by the power of the water, the entity will lose its form, and hence its hold upon the soul, and losing hold, by determined effort the vice which gave it life may be washed away.

"The neophyte who treads the Path and lives amidst the foulness of town and city life should wash his soul thrice daily, invoking the power of water to his aid. Each time he calls, he should will that his lower self be flooded from above with a downward pouring stream of mental and astral water; thus will he keep his subtler bodies clean. This process should also accompany the bathing of the flesh.

"Those whom the undines have learnt to recognize may also use this knowledge and this power to

cleanse the souls of other men, even to cleanse an area of a town or room with streams of water-energy. Apply this to disease by concentrating water-power into its subtler counterpart ; invoke the undines and bid them wash away the stain. Having cleansed most thoroughly, renew by calling on the fire ; release its agents and its energy that they may revivify the matter thus made clean. Cleanse by the power of water, illumine by the power of fire. We lend our aid ; you must direct the energies we bring ; together we will labour to purify the earth.

" Spiritual fire is the great regenerating energy, the ' power which maketh all things new '. Unlike the flames of earth it does not consume the substance in which it burns ; it is undying and eternal, impersonal, immortal, universal, the all-pervading power of the universe. It is centred in the spiritual sun, and streams forth into the universe through its counterpart, the physical luminary ; yet it is free and everywhere present, the life-giving power behind all form, the central energy which pervades all space and dynamizes every atom. Applied spiritually it regenerates, applied materially it destroys.

" The secret knowledge of the fire is hid within man's fiery counterpart, his Atmic self ; if he can unlock that knowledge he will learn to transmute the earthly flame and command the power of spiritual fire. Then no enemy can resist him, no obstacle may stay the fulfilment of his purpose and his will, for he will breathe upon it the fire of his own soul and it will vanish. Concentrated, intense, fierce and

fiery, this power may be wielded by the man who knows the secret of the fire.

"Seek then the fire within yourselves. Learn to release its flaming life, burn every evil in your soul until it is consumed, regenerate your vehicles with fire, that through them the waters of life may freely flow, unsullied and pure for the refreshment of the world. Those who seek to heal and teach must first be pure. Their duty is to feed the souls of men with the bread and water of life, therefore their hands must be clean. Invoke the power of fire and turn it against everything that would obstruct your progress on the Path; focus its fiery life and energy upon your enemies, the dark ones who attack the brothers whom you love. Seek not to give it form; call down its fiery and explosive power into their midst, and they will vanish from your sight. Learn gradually to use it in the healing of disease. By its very nature it consumes all that is at enmity with life and health, and at the same time regenerates the living cell and tissue. The kingdom of fire is all about you; its denizens will answer to your call; employ them as soldiers and spiritual scavengers; enrol them in the human army of those who fight for the light against their enemies of the kingdom of darkness.

"Let every spiritual thought and word and deed be instinct with the energy of fire, give to your words and deeds a quality of intensity and power as if you yourself were a living flame. Grow more fiery every day, for fire will purify and regenerate those

who invoke it into their lives. Become men of fire."

The immediate followers of the Lord Buddha were taught that there were three great prohibitions, which all must observe if they were to remain disciples of the Great One. They are stated as follows :

"An ordained disciple must not commit any unchaste act. The disciple who commits an unchaste act is no longer a disciple of the Sakyamuni.

"Again, an ordained disciple must not take except what has been given to him. The disciple who takes, be it so little as a penny's worth, is no longer a disciple of the Sakyamuni.

"And lastly, an ordained disciple must not knowingly and malignantly deprive any harmless creature of life, not even an earthworm or an ant. The disciple who knowingly and malignantly deprives any harmless creature of life is no longer a disciple of the Sakyamuni.

"These are the three great prohibitions." [1]

Gossip, worry, impurity and similar failings are among the many fetters with which we bind ourselves. We alone can strike them off, and until we have begun to do this the Masters cannot call us into closer relationship with Themselves ; therefore, while concentrating our attention upon the development of the powers of consciousness, we must also remember how important it is that the conduct of our daily lives should be in every way

[1] *The Gospel of the Buddha*, by Paul Carus.

worthy of the great ideals towards which we are striving.

Unfailing courtesy, unselfishness and humility must characterize the spiritual man, and we should try to develop them until they shine forth continually in our lives. In reality, each one of us who openly stands for the higher life and the service of the Masters bears the honour of the Great White Brotherhood in his hands; the movements to which we belong, the leaders whom we follow, both human and superhuman, are judged very largely by our conduct before the eyes of the world; we cannot afford to neglect this fact and, as aspirants towards the higher life, our manners must be perfect, our speech refined, our words always "kind, sensible and true," our ethical and moral standards of life lofty and pure. As the Head of the Order of the Star in the East has said, we must learn to "Live nobly".

We shut ourselves out from the presence of the Masters by the limitations of our personalities. We remain imprisoned by the daily failures and indulgences which, though they may seem small and insignificant in themselves, form a cage against which the wings of our soul beat in vain. However anxious we may be to penetrate more deeply into the spiritual life, the Masters are infinitely more eager to welcome us there. They see the potentialities for service, and the Adept-to-be in each one of us, and, on the other hand, They know the agonies and the ignorance of the world. They hear the low moan of pain which rises up continually

from the whole planet, from animals and humans alike; if, therefore, any of us show the slightest promise of being fit to serve, They meet us more than half-way, because of this urgent need. They pour out inspiration, power and knowledge. They teach us the way, and if we would follow and join Them, we must tread the same Path which They have trodden before us and, applying the knowledge and power which They have placed in our hands to liberate ourselves from our fetters, win our way to Their feet.

In dwelling upon the romance of spiritual achievement, we do not always remember how it has been attained. We forget the daily concentration; the deliberate sublimation of every weakness of the lower nature; the slow building in of qualities; the pain, the untiring effort and the periods of infinite weariness. Never a day or an hour must pass without consideration of the main principles; the theories of the spiritual life must be put into actual practice and given concrete expression. We must keep the romance and the vision splendid before our eyes, but let the inward realization have the effect of perfecting both the big and the little things of daily life; thus may we throw off the fetters which bind us and so take up the work which the Masters are waiting to give us.

The realization of our limitations may well make us serious, but still let us remember that this is the greatest adventure which anyone could ever undertake. It is an exploration into the inner fields

of our consciousness ; there are peaks to be climbed, knowledge to be gained and power waiting to be released, all within ourselves. Joy and determination must be allied to the seriousness and responsibility which we feel, and though the human element may give way and a hundred and one circumstances delay us, *there is no power on earth which can stop us* ; we cannot be beaten, we can achieve *if we will.* We are predestined to reach our goal from the first moment the effort is made, " because it is God which worketh in us ".[1]

As we have already found, we release energy, we do not create it. The power is within us, and by meditation we may gain a glimpse of the potency of the soul and gradually awaken to a realization of the enormous force which is at our disposal. Science has discovered that incalculable energies are locked up within a single atom—a body which is so small that no physical instrument, however great its power of magnification, can make it visible. What, then, must be the force residing within the human soul ? When this force is touched, all doubt, all fear of failure, begin to disappear ; by its power the Inner Ruler immortal will one day reign supreme ; this body, which seems to plod along so slowly in the lower worlds, is then recognized and trained to become a perfect instrument ready to the hand of the God which is our true Self.

Let us turn upwards and inwards, therefore, to that reservoir of power and unlock the gates.

[1] Phil., 2, 13.

Inspiration and unlimited energy will then flood our vehicles, and a greater capacity to bear the strain of daily effort without tiring, or admitting the possibility of failure, will be developed. Hardly any of us use this power as we should, and in normal man it seldom manifests itself; on the rare occasions when it does, the world is astonished. When a man is pushed to the utmost limit of his endurance, he calls upon the Will which is one aspect of this inner power, and the result is some superhuman act of heroism. During the war it was a frequent occurrence for some puny little man, some weakling, when faced with an emergency which was likely to crush him, to change suddenly into a strong and self-reliant individual and to act in a manner which astonished both his comrades and himself. For a moment he had unlocked something of the omnipotence latent in us all.

We should not need to wait for the unbearable stress of circumstance to call up this power. We know of it, and we must find the way to "tap" it; we can use the resistless white fire of Atma, which is behind and within each one of us, when facing the problems of daily life and in our task of self-training. Because it is irresistible, it will dispel our sense of weakness and bring us joy in our work, so that we shall almost dance our way through life. Though sorrows and difficulties may surround each one of us who is earnestly seeking the Light, the joy and the romance of our adventure far outweighs the pain. Let us take every sorrow and trial, and make of it a new weapon with which to cut the fetters which bind

the soul. The Masters are waiting for us to be free to help Them; is not this sufficient incentive to arouse us to a supreme effort, to awaken the power of the Spiritual Will which is within us?

Whenever we turn our thoughts to the Path and seek to hasten our progress upon it, we find that the two great fundamentals of the spiritual life are love and service; these must form the background and motive of our whole lives. When we meditate, for example, we should hold in our thoughts all those who need help; when we endeavour to raise our consciousness, we should try to draw others with us; and should we gain illumination, our first aspiration should be to share it with others. It need hardly be said that our motive in helping others must not be to gain thereby; as Maeterlink says: "Sacrifice should never be the means of ennoblement, but only the sign of being ennobled." We advance most when we forget ourselves and our own development; the attempt to help and to teach will carry us further along the Path than much introspection.

Sacrifice is the keynote of the lives of the Saviours of the world; when the Lord Buddha, after a long series of earthly lives, stood on the threshold of Nirvana (a state of consciousness which is beyond our conception, and which has been described by Bishop Leadbeater as "Peace in Omniscience"), He deliberately turned away from the reward which He had won, determining to wait until the whole of humanity should be ready to follow Him.

Every one of the Masters who chooses to be limited by a physical body, in order to remain in touch with the earth, makes a similar sacrifice. It is written somewhere, that even a high Initiate, who has contacted the Nirvanic consciousness, may be plunged into a profound depression on returning to the body—so great is the contrast between Nirvana and the life of the earth.

Contemplation of the magnitude of the sacrifice at that high level can help us, for it will make us ready and glad to give up all that we hold dear at the call of the Masters, realizing that beside Their great renunciation our sacrifices are small indeed. Frequently it is not until we analyse our motives closely, by the new standard which the Path demands, that we realize how completely we have surrounded ourselves with little personal habits and indulgences, which form a circle round us, out of which we are loth to step. Some of us think we can work only among harmonious people ; others feel that they can do only one particular type of work ; while others, again, find their activities limited by the dislike of some person or group.

For those of us who are striving to tread the Path this attitude will not do ; we must be ready to break ourselves of such habits and to work with the same sunny, cheery energy among inharmonious or critical people, as we should display amongst those we love. We must turn our hands to any work to which the Master calls us, even though we may think ourselves totally unfitted to the task. If we wish definitely to

work under a Master, we must have complete, unshakable confidence in His knowledge and His wisdom, and be ready to go at His command to the help of all. No personal considerations should for a moment affect our obedience to His wishes.

As stated previously, personal dislikes must be quickly eliminated; they, and almost every other weakness of character, can be overcome by raising the consciousness to that plane where there is no separateness. Troubles loom large when looked at from below, where they are seen in isolation instead of as part of a whole. In our personal consciousness, uncongenial environment, family relationship, criticism and clash of temperament often seem to overpower us; but if we raise ourselves to the plane of Unity, and look down upon it all from that level, it will become clear that the person or group from whom we differ is really one with us.

Let us practise this way of looking at life and people until it becomes habitual, then we shall attain to that state where we can co-operate and work in harmony with all with whom the Master brings us into contact. For criticism and dislike we must substitute tolerance, sympathy and understanding; then He will have servants ready to do His work in joyful acquiescence, instead of being met, as unfortunately might be the case, with a flood of protest, because we "dislike" the person to be helped or the work to be done.

As the keynote of love and service is expressed in his life, the aspirant gradually becomes filled with

growing love for his fellow-men, and develops an abiding sense of unity with all that lives. This sense of unity and increasing compassion are expressions of the first thrill of the Christ-consciousness within him; there, in the secret chamber of the heart, which many lives of service have prepared, the Christ-Child is about to be born. The Mystic Rose—the outer expression of that birth—begins to bloom. The Masters shed upon the neophyte Their blessing and Their love; under that beneficent influence his nature unfolds like a flower beneath the rays of the sun, and begins to shed its beauty and its radiance upon the world; then he shares quite definitely in the work of the Masters, for he becomes a bearer of Their blessing wherever he goes, and through his heart—now opened wide in compassionate longing to serve—pour the powers of the Christ-consciousness. That which has been born within him is destined to grow "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ";[1] he has entered the stream of the occult life and one day will find himself standing on the further shore, a Saviour of men.

Before that great consummation may be achieved, there are definite stages of growth, steps on the Path, by which man reaches Adeptship. The first of these is marked by the change in his relationship towards his fellow-men, referred to at the beginning of this book, when he gradually ceases to live for himself alone. He begins to work for a cause; he becomes

[1] Eph., 4, 13.

an idealist, and embracing the religion of Service, finds himself rising above the dogmas and the sectarianism of an orthodox Church. He then comes, apparently by accident, into contact with those who are able to teach him; they guide him through the years of his spiritual adolescence, until he finds himself at his Master's feet.

All nature develops upon one or other of the seven Rays,[1] at the head of each of which stands an Adept, who is the perfect product of that Ray. Broadly speaking, and allowing for exceptions, every one gravitates towards that Master who is the head of the Ray along which he is developing. For many lives his Master has been watching him and waiting eagerly for the time when He may at last draw him nearer to Himself. "The light from the one Master, the one unfading golden light of spirit, shoots its effulgent beams on the disciple from the very first."[2] When the time comes, the neophyte takes his first official step upon the Path; this step is called "Probation" and means that he is placed under observation by the Master and given favourable opportunities of developing his character and of establishing himself firmly in the occult life. He joins a great "family" of which the members of the Great White Brotherhood are the Elders, and his fellow-pupils all over the world are his brothers and sisters; the ties of these relationships are among the closest possible to him on earth.

[1] *The Seven Rays*, by Ernest Wood.
[2] *The Voice of the Silence.*

PROBATION

Through long, long lives has He watched over us;
All our long past He knows as yesterday,
And on the seeds of good within our souls
The wondrous sunshine of His love has streamed
Unceasingly through endless æons of time.
Slowly those germs have quickened into life,
Till faintly, feebly, intermittently,
Some small response lights up our wakening hearts;
Until at last we learn that there is One
Whose love has streamed on us through ages past;
One Who shall some day weld us into Him
As living organs of His light and life.
Long ere we know Him, linked are our souls to His,
Who ever seeks to draw us to His feet,
Till, half-awakened, with half-opened eyes,
Faintly we glimpse His face. Then, led to Him,
There at His feet, the first weak pledge we take,
To try to serve the Brotherhood of Those
Who live to serve the world. Then all the chains,
Forged through long lives of seeking selfish ends,
Must one by one be loosened, snapt, cast off
By strength of love and gratitude to Him
To Whom we owe all that we are and have.
To His clear sight our future is not hid;
The rôle predestined for each one He knows,
And moulds environment and circumstance
To further swiftest growth towards that end.
And not for what we are, He values us,
But for that power which some day we shall be—
A power to aid Those Few, Whose mighty hands
Hold back the powers of darkness; Those Who shed
On all the world Their light, Their peace, Their strength,
Who ever help, unknown, Who work unthanked,
Whose unseen toil yet raises all mankind
Towards their Father's glory, which shall shine
Godlike at last in all, as now in Them.

D. H. S.

The next stage of his development is his "Acceptance" as a disciple of the Master, when he is united occultly with Him. At this stage a bond is formed between them, which will never be broken except in the rare instance of the disciple failing absolutely and utterly; because of this close link, the disciple may develop the capacity of putting himself into the consciousness of the Master at any time, and so learn His point of view upon any subject. As the time passes and his nature unfolds to the requisite degree, the Master draws the disciple into a still closer relationship with Himself, in which he is known as the "Son of the Master"; after which he takes the First Initiation, and passes through the first of the portals into the Temple of the True Mysteries. A great expansion of consciousness then takes place, as a result of which he awakens to the Buddhic world and continues the development of the vehicles in which he will one day be able to function consciously. This First Initiation, symbolized in the Christian religion as the Birth of the Christ, and the four subsequent Initiations lead to successive expansions of consciousness and to the gradual loosening of the fetters which bind ordinary men.

The Second Initiation is symbolized in the Gospels as the Baptism of Our Lord, after which He became a homeless wanderer and began His mission as a teacher and healer of men. Then follows the Third Initiation: this is the Transfiguration on the spiritual mountain and, at this stage of human evolution, is generally followed by a period of intense loneliness

and suffering, as expressed in the drama of the Gospels, when Our Lord passed through Gethsemane, experiencing the "dark night of the soul"; yet the Initiate "sets His face steadfastly towards Jerusalem,"[1] knowing fully all that awaits Him there.

After passing through the shame, obloquy, pain and ostracism which accompany the crucifixion of the lower self, the disciple takes the Fourth Initiation, becomes an Arhat, and realizes much more fully that identity with all manifested life, which is expressed in the words of our Lord: "I and my Father are One."[2]

At the Fifth Initiation he "ascends" above all possibility of relapse into human weakness and failure; he becomes a fully unfolded and perfected man, a Saviour of the world. He has achieved the complete development of his will, his wisdom-compassion and his intellect. His power of love has become so great that he loves every individual in the world with a love greater than that which a mother feels for her first-born. He has the power to obtain full knowledge of everything within the Solar System, he possesses perfect understanding, the divine compassion; he has conquered death and has become a Master of Life, a Lord of Wisdom, a Spiritual King.

"Behold, the mellow light that floods the eastern sky. In signs of praise both heaven and earth unite. And from the fourfold manifested powers a chant of love ariseth, both from the flaming

[1] St. Luke, 9, 5.
[2] St. John, 10, 30.

fire and flowing water, and from sweet-smelling earth and rushing wind.

Hark! from the deep, unfathomable vortex of that golden light in which the Victor bathes, all nature's wordless voice in thousand tones ariseth to proclaim:

Joy unto you, O men of Myalba (earth)
A pilgrim hath returned back from the other shore.
A new Arhan is born." [1]

We cannot hope to appreciate the full significance of this great achievement; the whole of the human race is exalted when one of its members attains to final liberation; this was and is the Initiate's inspiration from the very first, and this upholds him in the heat of the conflict, when his soul droops under the crushing burden of the suffering and ignorance of the world. This was what Our Lord meant when He said: "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." [2]

The Gospel story acquires a new meaning when we realize that it is not only an account of the achievement of the Christ at a particular epoch, but it is a dramatic representation of the stages through which every human soul, striving to force his own evolution ahead of that of the race as a whole, must pass on his way to the fulfilment of the glorious destiny, which was ordained for him from the beginning.

[1] *The Voice of the Silence*, p. 99.

[2] St. John, 12, 32.

Throughout the ages, men have enacted that spiritual drama. The ancient and narrow Path of swifter development is open to all. It is found and entered by those alone who, having realized the transitory nature of all material happiness and gain, seek the eternal bliss of Nirvana and those treasures of the soul which "neither moth nor rust doth corrupt."[1]

The Adept is the flower of the human race, its highest product, and Adeptship is the ultimate destiny of all men. Those who seek it now, impelled by a burning desire that will not be denied, must tread the selfsame Path trodden by the many Saints and Saviours who have gone before him. Each one who passes inwards towards the Heart of Being makes the road easier for those who follow after and helps to make lighter the heavy burden of the Karma of the world.

The Christ and the Buddha are the Great Exemplars of the human race; what They have done, we can do, for They were once men like ourselves, and "what any son of man has done, every son of man can do".

Before passing to the consideration of the more personal aspect of the Masters in the next chapter, it is perhaps well to remember that there is a danger that in thinking of Them as dwelling in distant Tibet, Egypt or Syria, and of the Great World-Teacher as appearing through the vehicle He has chosen, we shall come to regard Them as

[1] St. Matt., 6, 19.

external Beings, far off and beyond our reach. The fact is that Their *consciousness* is one with ours, it is only Their *bodies* which are separate.

The Christ-consciousness within us is the real Saviour; in the Masters it is fully unfolded and perfectly expressed. Unless we have discovered it, learned to vibrate in harmony with it, and to realize it, however dimly, all the Saviours, who ever lived, cannot illumine our lives. That is what St. Paul meant when he said: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you."[1] Angelus Silesius expresses this idea in his well-known lines:

> Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born,
> And not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn.
> The cross on Golgotha thou lookest to in vain,
> Unless within thyself it be set up again.

The Christ or Buddhic consciousness expresses itself always as intuitive wisdom, love, compassion and service, and the possession of those qualities is the unmistakable sign of its presence in man.

In the same way that the life of the Logos is present in every atom, yet is one and indivisible, Christ is present in every man. He not only knows us as His children, HE IS US; we are not separate from Him. He knows us through the Christ-consciousness, present in each of us. He, and His "blessed Communion of Saints," as the Masters are called in the Bible, are the perfect embodiments

[1] Phil., 2, 12, 13.

of that consciousness; They include within Themselves the Christ in us. They are that Christ, the second aspect of the Trinity, the Son-aspect, the Preserver, the love of God manifested as compassion incarnate in the Great World-Teacher, whom, in the West, we call "Christ". He has reached a stage of development beyond that of the Fifth Initiation and is completely one with the Logos in full consciousness: as His is the Second Ray, the love aspect of the Trinity finds its natural expression through Him. The confusion of thought in the New Testament is explained when we realize this, and understand that the term "Christ" is used there to designate the Cosmic Christ, the second aspect of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, and the "Christ in you".

Only by profound meditation can we glimpse the essential oneness of the Christ-consciousness with all manifested life. That is perhaps the reason why the Master K. H. said:[1] "You must dig deep into yourself to find the God within you, and listen to His voice, which is *your* voice."[2]

At certain great epochs Christ, in His office of World-Teacher, comes outwardly to the world in order that inwardly He may come more closely to every man. In the vehicle which He chooses, He finds a physical focus through which He is able to come right down to the flesh in each of us. Otherwise the barriers between the ego and the personality prevent Him from getting His

[1] See Chap. 3.

[2] *At the Feet of the Master.*

love through to any man, except to him who, with the help of his Master and by his own efforts, has broken those barriers down; such a man has no need of a temporary visitation from an externally incarnated Saviour, for *he* is learning to dwell for ever in the presence of Divine Love. In occult books we find the phrase: "You must become the Path," which again simply refers to the essential oneness of all life; "you," the Masters, and the Path are all expressions of the One Life and are one being, one entity; all evolutionary progress is marked by a deepening realization of this fact.

This line of thought opens up for us another field of study and meditation, which has as its object the discovery and realization of the essential oneness of life; not merely an intellectual appreciation of the doctrine, but a realization of its truth by personal experience, until we gradually become continually conscious of its presence within ourselves and in every form of life with which we are surrounded. To gain this we must meditate until the knowledge of His unbroken companionship dawns within our deepest selves, and we learn to see Him everywhere about us.

We may practise unifying our Self with something or someone—with trees, animals, children or our best friend—in order to achieve this realization; we must beware of becoming personal in application of this method, for the personality belongs to separateness, but try rather to pulse with the same

beat, to tune in with them, to learn to know them from within, to recognize our essential spiritual identity with them, and eventually to see God looking at us through their eyes.

Great artists unify themselves with the life behind the form they see, and this is the source of their inspiration. We, too, if we would paint a glorious picture on the canvas of our lives, must try to get behind the outward manifestation to the life pulsing within every plant, every tree, every jewel, every raindrop and every man. In olden times Our Lord struck for us this note of unity, saying: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."[1] He spoke of it again at Ommen:

"I belong to all,
Because I really love, I want you to love,
Because I really feel, I want you to feel,
Because I hold everything dear, I want you to hold everything dear,
Because I want to protect, you should protect, and that is the only life worth having; that is the only happiness worth possessing."[2]

The Masters have already achieved the realization of unity. They know us just as the Logos knows the life-urge in the smallest flower, the farthest star, the greatest archangel. They live in the Presence of the One Light, which throws innumerable shadows

[1] St. Matt., 25, 40.

[2] The above is merely my own recollection of what He said, and not an official report.—G. H.

upon the screen of Time and Space; if we would reach Them we must get behind the forms which produce the many shadows, in order to discover the Light. When we truly realize the oneness of life, the "dewdrop," which is our highest Self, will "slip into the shining sea" of the One Self, and it will seem as if the sea has poured into the dewdrop, for then the mighty power of the Great Self becomes expressed in and through the illuminated lesser self.

This doctrine of Divine Immanence should not be mistaken for pantheism, for although the Logos has put Himself into every atom on every plane in the Solar System, He also *transcends* everything. "Having pervaded this universe with a fragment of Myself, I remain," He says in the *Bhagavad-Gita*; in a similar way only a fragment of you and of me is manifested in our personalities. Even though we try to bring every ounce of spiritual energy down on to this plane, there is always that portion, which is never fully incarnate, which remains behind, for the soul of man is measureless and inexhaustible. This deepest Self is sometimes called "The Silent Watcher," though the same title is also given to a very high official in the Inner Government of the Solar System.[1] This "I remain" in us corresponds to the "I remain" of the Logos. The supreme object of meditation is to pierce the many veils of illusion and find this innermost Self; then we shall know the

[1] See *The Masters and the Path* (2nd Edition), by C. W. Leadbeater, p. 483.

shadow which men mistake for realities, for what they are, and realize our identity with God. Meditation on the Divine Immanence will help us to realize that the World-Teacher and the Masters, though Their bodies may be kept in seclusion, are in reality " ever in our midst ".

CHAPTER III

It is an inspiration, if we think
That there are men further advanced than we
Who know the secrets of Eternity,
And, standing poised upon Heaven's very brink,
Yet will not enter, till they help us on
The hard and narrow Path that they have gone.
Wisdom and love, these were their guiding stars.
They live but to be channels of God's will.
Rejected, or received, they labour still
To pilot this sad world through all its years,
That the great plan may some day be fulfilled,
And life be as our Heavenly Father willed.
With deep compassion, and a wistful love,
They look on every deed of sin and shame.
They know, they understand, they do not blame ;
They are not angels from a world above,
But men, who, through mistakes and mental strife,
Attained at length to the Eternal life.[1]

[1] *The Masters*, by F. H. Aldhouse.

THE MASTERS

A MASTER is an Adept who takes pupils. As stated in the previous chapter, an Adept is one who, in Christian terminology, having first experienced the Birth of the Christ-Child in his heart, has developed until he has reached "the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," [1] and has fulfilled the command: "Be ye perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect." [2] He has completely unfolded every human possibility and has entered upon a new evolutionary cycle, which leads him from the human into the superhuman kingdom of nature.

One of the reasons for the founding of religions is to help ardent souls to find and to tread the Path which leads to Adeptship. Many think that the wars and the materialism which have accompanied the rise of the Christian religion, for example, are reasons for believing that it has failed; but no one can judge of the success or failure of a religion unless he knows how many souls it has assisted along the Path, and how many Initiates and Adepts it has produced.

Beyond the stage of Adeptship there are five further Initiations, the Tenth being the highest

[1] Eph., 4, 13.
[2] 2nd. Cor., 13, 11.

attainable on this planet; there is, however, a limitless field of development before us within and beyond our Solar System. If also there were not, within each of us, a limitless power of achievement, we might well be daunted by the prospect; but we do not tread the Path relying solely on our own powers, but upon the "God that worketh in us"; it is that Divine Life within, with its resistless urge, which carries us forward. It follows, therefore, that the more we can identify ourselves with it, rather than with our mere exterior personality, the more quickly we shall travel.

Some of the Great Ones, on achieving Adeptship, pass completely away from this planet, and work as agents of the Logos in other spheres of activity; others voluntarily remain in contact with the earth through physical bodies, having made the great renunciation of freedom and bliss beyond human conception, in order to remain in close touch with Their younger brothers—the great mass of humanity—and to help them to find and tread the Path which They have trodden. They live in seclusion, away from the world which does not understand Them and would hinder Their beneficent activities.

Two of the Masters, who are closely connected with the Theosophical Society, live in Tibet; one of Them, the Master Morya, is described as a tall Indian belonging to the Rajputs, one of the most magnificent of the Indian races; He is said to be

dark in colour, extremely handsome in appearance, gracious and dignified.

His "brother in occult research," the Master Kuthumi, has taken a body from Kashmir. He is fairer than the Master Morya, and is said to show forth the glorious beauty of the ideal Christ. The Master Jesus was already a disciple when He gave up His body to the Lord Maitreya at the founding of the Christian religion. He has since achieved Adeptship, and is now in charge of that religion. He lives in a Syrian body in the mountains of Lebanon.

The Master, the Prince Rakoczi, the great Hungarian Adept, is in charge of the evolution of Europe. He lives at present in Central Europe, but He travels much; He is often called the Master "the Count" or "the Prince".

The Master Hilarion, who is said to be an Egypto-Greek, lives in the Levant, in Cyprus and in Egypt. He inspired the writing of *Light on the Path* and *The Idyll of the White Lotus*.

The Master Serapis belongs to the Egyptian section of the Great White Lodge, which is called the Brotherhood of Luxor. He taught Colonel Olcott at one period of his occult career.[1]

There are two English Masters, one of whom was Sir Thomas More, who was beheaded in the reign of Henry VIII; the other was Thomas Vaughan, (Eugenius Philalethes) the great alchemist and Platonist of the Middle Ages. Mr. A. E. Waite's

[1] See *Old Diary Leaves*, by H. S. Olcott.

book[1] on the life and work of the latter is most interesting and instructive.

Then there is the Great World-Teacher Himself, the Supreme "Teacher of angels and of men," the Lord Maitreya, who has chosen, for the purposes of His work, to live in a physical body taken from the ancient Irish race, known as the Tuatha-de-Danaan. He is said to have His home on the southern slopes of the Himalayas; from His window He can look out over His garden, where rhododendrons and roses bloom in their seasons, across the wide plains of India. We believe that He is already making preparations to come forth from His home, for the upliftment and salvation of our uncomprehending world, which rejected Him and killed the body He wore when last He came, and which, we pray, may not again reject Him. The Order of the Star in the East was formed some fifteen years ago, to prepare the world for His coming, in the hope that "the great tragedy" of two thousand years ago should not occur again.

In trying to appreciate the work of the Masters, we must remember the great fact that They have "at-oned" Themselves, firstly with the Divine within Themselves and, through that, with the Logos of our system, and therefore with all manifested life. This is the real meaning of the word "At-one-ment".

One result of such an achievement is a full and complete comprehension of God's Plan, and on this Their work is based. They work with perfect unanimity, and in full co-operation with the Logos

[1] *The Works of Thomas Vaughan*, by A. E. Waite.

and each other, in furthering the evolution of the Solar System in all the kingdoms of nature. They know without any possibility of doubt the divine ideal for every form of life—for, say, a horse, a daffodil, a salamander, a human being of the Fourth or Fifth Root-Race, and for the whole human race at the end of this period of evolution. The work of the Great White Lodge is organized in sections, each section undertaking a certain part of the work of furthering the Great Plan. As They are perfect men, so is Their organization perfect, and each Great One works in that department in which He is placed according to His temperament and special faculties. One of the marks of an Adept is that in all His work, He achieves the maximum result with the minimum of effort; there is no waste, no overlapping, but a perfect, ordered and continuous activity.

In our world the members of the Great White Brotherhood work along two main lines: the stimulation of the life, and the perfecting of forms for its expression. (We must not forget that They may also be engaged in work outside this earth for other planets.) Under the first heading, on the life side, we have the founding of religions, the sending out of spiritual teachers, the flooding of the inner worlds with Light, the inspiration of philanthropists, teachers, statesmen, artists and scientists in any work which is in accordance with the Plan. In these ways man's inner urge to press on towards an ideal is strengthened. In Their work from without, upon the form side of all the kingdoms of nature, they are

always striving to perfect vehicles that may better express the added powers of the growing and unfolding consciousness. An instance of this kind of help to humanity is to be seen in the segregation of the races and peoples, the selection of the types and their intermarriage. This work may be clearly seen in progress in America, where large numbers of people of many different races and countries have been brought together, with the result that a new type is appearing.

The Masters do not work so much for immediate results, as for a future which may be thousands of years ahead. Most of the work is done at egoic levels. When, for example, it is decided that a particular set of ideas and ideals is to be given out to the world, the people do not necessarily hear a physical proclamation; the mental world is flooded with the ideas, and individuals begin to pick up the thought. Poets write, artists dream, statesmen speak of it, and gradually it influences physical life. This method may take hundreds or even thousands of years, but in the æonian evolution of life and form, such periods are relatively unimportant.

The mental world in the West, for example, for the past fifty years or so has been flooded with the idea of Reincarnation and Karma, and to quicken its acceptance the Theosophical Society was founded to teach and expound the doctrine, with the result that it is now written and spoken of universally, and may be considered not only as a Theosophical idea but as part of the general content of the mental

atmosphere. It would appear that the inner worlds are now being flooded with the idea of the Masters and the Path.

Each one of us has the opportunity of helping the Members of the Great White Brotherhood in Their work, if we care to avail ourselves of it. If a Master wishes to manifest His presence, or to influence a person with an idea, a blessing, a current of power, a stimulation, or an awakening of intuition, there are several ways by which He may proceed. He may, for example, drive His thought down through the spiritual, mental, emotional and etheric worlds to the person selected; to do this calls for the exercise of very great power, some of which is necessarily lost in transmission. The Master may materialize Himself, as was done, for example, in the early days of the Theosophical Society, as may be read in those wonderful volumes of Colonel Olcott's *Old Diary Leaves*,[1] or the Master may select the nearest person who can be used as a channel and send His force and blessing through him.

Fifty years ago, there were but few men and women who were sufficiently informed and sensitive to serve in this way, so that the first and second methods had to be employed. Since those days, however, instruction upon these subjects has been so freely given, that any sincere and devoted worker for humanity can become a channel for Their blessing, varying in capacity, according to the degree to which

[1] Loc. cit., by H. S. Olcott, Theosophical Publishing House.

he has attuned himself to the Masters' vibrations. This last method would certainly be the most economical, if not the most effective. The privilege of serving the Masters in this way is open to all, and we should keep a constant watch upon ourselves to see that we are always ready. The call might come, for example, as an intuition to go and see some particular person, and that visit might be the occasion chosen by the Master to send the blessing or message to him. We must, however, learn to discriminate clearly between intuition and impulse; the pressure behind a true intuition always remains until expressed in action; that behind an impulse dies away. At any moment a member of the Great White Brotherhood may use one of us as a conscious or unconscious messenger; how necessary, therefore, that we should always be on the alert to hear and answer the call!

If we were to keep a record of our lives by means of a chart drawn from this point of view, we should probably be surprised. The vertical divisions beginning at the left-hand bottom corner could be marked successively: "depression," "ordinary control," "peace," "serenity," "ecstasy". The divisions along the bottom horizontal line could indicate the days of the month. Our "graph" at the end of the month would look like a rough sea, or the outline of a jagged mountain range against the sky; for we move by "spurts," by fits and starts; our resolutions carry us for a few days up through "peace" to "serenity"; then we fall, and the next few

days are spent in regaining the lost position. A book, or an inspired lecturer, or an inner realisation may carry us up to the peak of "ecstasy," but the following morning we find that we have failed to maintain our tone.

Our aim should be to make our "graph" appear as a steadily, if slowly, ascending line. The actual height attained in a given period might be less, but the fewer times we fall, the more we shall acquire the habit of steady and continuous advancement, and thus the more surely shall we achieve the mountain-top. When facing times of depression and lack of tone, and striving manfully to eliminate them, we should not be unduly affected by a contemplation of them. They are inevitable during our spiritual adolescence, and are, indeed, signs of growth. All writers on practical mysticism have borne testimony to the fact that periods of "spiritual aridity" follow times of upliftment and illumination. The eye of the soul may be darkened, just as may the physical organ; if we gaze for a long period at very strong light, we find on looking away that everything appears dark. The same is surely true of spiritual vision. During these times of soul-darkness we must adhere steadily to the routine of life and meditation which we have set ourselves, and perform all our worldly duties with exactitude and perfection, in spite of the absence of the inspiration which formerly filled them with joy. The pain of those experiences may be used as a spur to intense efforts to overcome them, and when once the light is regained, the joy of

re-union far outweighs the pain and makes it more than worth while to have endured the agony and distress of soul-loneliness.

The Master will be able to use more freely, as a channel for His blessings, one who can be relied upon to be free from any emotional crisis which would endanger the work; one who will not oppose the stream of His power with barriers caused by criticism or doubt, nor allow the work to be interfered with by any personal considerations. Let us remember that if we have been unable to share with Him some special part of His work, that particular opportunity can never occur again. We must try, therefore, always to be in a state of harmony and sympathy with every human being, so that we may be able to help him if required.

In *The Masters and the Path* Bishop Leadbeater says: "Only by learning to forget the personal self can we approach the Masters." It would be interesting if, before going to sleep, we were to try to count the number of times, during the day, when we had thought of ourselves. We talk of ourselves and our progress, we think of how we have been neglected or insulted, of our fatigue, of our good or bad luck, or of our achievements. When we are thinking of ourselves we are wasting time, unless it is to say: "What more can I give in order to help; how can I better listen for the Master's call, and steady myself so that I may be always ready to serve as a 'trouble saver' for Him?"

If thou couldst empty all thyself of self,
Like to a shell dishabited,
Then might He find thee on the ocean's shelf
And say: "This is not dead,"
And fill thee with Himself instead.

But thou art so replete with very "thou,"
And art so full of shrewd activity,
That when He comes, He says: "This is enow
Unto itself; 'twere better let it be,
It is so small and full, there is no room for Me.[1]

We are told that at the stage of Acceptance the disciple can test his thought by placing it beside that of the Master. We can, however, begin to do this, here and now, through the very definite link which every aspirant to the spiritual life has with Those who are the Spiritual Guardians of the race. It is not an easy thing to do, for success in it demands that we shall drop all personal predilections and prejudices. In order to develop this capacity we must try, in our daily meditation and in our lives, to see the world from the Master's point of view. Every time we so test our thought we strengthen our link with Him; the stronger it grows, the more the Master will be able to use it as a channel for the outpouring of His power. Eventually this practice must become automatic; in the terminology of broadcasting we shall be so perfectly "tuned in" to Him, that every thought and act becomes a reflection

[1] *Indwelling*, by E. D. W.

of His will. Ours will be the attitude expressed in the poem:

Waiting the word of the Master,
Watching the Hidden Light;
Listening to catch His orders
In the very midst of the fight;

Seeing His slightest signal
Across the heads of the throng;
Hearing His faintest whisper
Above earth's loudest song.[1]

The work of the Masters through trained disciples is, at this stage of evolution, more rare than the more general work referred to above; a man is only chosen as a recipient of Their teaching if it is thought that, for the amount of force which will be employed in training him, there will be adequate return in the form of benefit to the whole race. We shall only be accepted as pupils when the Masters see that we are so sincere, selfless, and in earnest, and so full of love for our fellow-men, as to make it worth Their while to expend the time and energy required to train us.

Most of the purely occult and spiritual training is given whilst the body is asleep; a magnificent example of this method has been given us by the Head of the Order of the Star in the East. When he was only thirteen years of age he wrote down,

[1] *At the Feet of the Master.*

word for word, His Master's teaching as it was given to him while out of the body. It was published in the book entitled *At the Feet of the Master*.[1] A wealth of information, also obtained in this way, is given in *The Masters and the Path*, by C. W. Leadbeater.

Theosophy teaches that the Occult Hierarchy was founded on this planet about six and a half million years ago. Mankind was not then at a very high stage of development, and so the planet Venus, the evolution of which is more than a Round[2] in advance of that of the earth, provided them with teachers. The Lords of the Flame, as They are sometimes called, came to found our Occult Hierarchy, and to stimulate the spark of mind in the infant humanity.

So far as we know, only four of the great Lords from Venus remain on our planet. They are known in occult literature as the Four Kumaras. They are the four Regents of the world, of whom One is higher than the others, and is called Sanat Kumara, the Supreme Ruler of our evolution, the King. He is said to be the greatest Being at present living on our earth, and to be responsible to the Logos for the evolution of this planet. Every form of manifested life on this earth is within His aura and His consciousness, so that He literally knows of everything which takes place upon it. He is the One Initiator, by whose permission alone Initiation can be given.

[1] Loc. cit., by J. Krishnamurti.

[2] For Information concerning Rounds see *Man: Whence, How and Whither*, by A. Besant and C. W. Leadbeater. (Theosophical Publishing House.)

He is sometimes referred to as the " Eternal Youth," sometimes as " The Ancient of Days ".

Under the four Lords of the Flame are the other members of the Occult Hierarchy, human beings of our own evolution, who, through utter devotion to the ideal of service, have become Adepts.

Hundreds of thousands of years ago, while Great Ones from Venus were acting in the capacity of World-Teachers, two friends, now known as the Lord Buddha and the Lord Maitreya, decided to dedicate themselves to the task of becoming Saviours of humanity. By almost inconceivable efforts They have succeeded, and One of Them, the Lord Buddha, filled the office of World-Teacher up to 2,500 years ago. He first came in that capacity to our Aryan race as Vyasa, in India, teaching Duty as being the path to God. Then, centuries later, He came to Egypt as Tehuti, taking Light as His symbol, and teaching truth, wisdom and knowledge. Later He came as Zarathustra to Persia, preaching Purity, the symbol of which is fire. Then He came to Greece as Orpheus, Harmony and Beauty His theme, Music His symbol; and in Greece arose a civilization not yet surpassed for beauty and joy. Lastly He came again in India, as the Lord Gautama, teaching Wisdom and Desirelessness, the doctrine of the Good Law and the Noble Eightfold Path, by which men may win liberation from the wheel of birth and death, and reach perfection. It was during this incarnation that He achieved Buddhahood, and so passed on to other work. The story of His

attainment may be read in *The Light of Asia* [1] and *The Gospel of the Buddha*.[2]

On His departure, His friend, the Lord Maitreya, took His place as World-Teacher, coming first as Shri Krishna in India, preaching loving-kindness and devotion, and then as Christ, preaching love and self-sacrifice. It is He, the present "World-Teacher," whom many of us expect once more.

The supreme privilege of serving Him is given to all who will take it, not only in this life, but for ever; once formed, the link with Him can never be broken. Let us prepare ourselves, let us concentrate every possible effort upon fitting ourselves to take this great opportunity of uniting ourselves with Him in the strongest of all bonds, the bond of self-sacrifice and of service.

[1] Loc cit., by Sir Edwin Arnold.

[2] Loc cit., by Paul Carus

ADDENDA I

SINCE these talks were given, the Voice which "spake as never man spake," has again been heard by men. The new incarnation of the World-Teacher has begun and the first notes of the divine symphony have been uttered, with which He will charm the ears of His children, removing their sorrows and healing their wounds.

The new *motif* consists of an appeal to men to enter with Him the Kingdom of Eternal Happiness, Beauty and Simplicity. During one memorable week, in July, 1926, He played upon that theme, fulfilling the hopes and prophecies of the last two thousand years.

Many members of the group of friends, whose studies provided the material for this book,[1] were present at the Star Camp at Ommen, where He chose to make the second definite manifestation of His presence; the reality of that event is unmistakable to those who were present, and the certainty of their knowledge of Him is unshakable; for He spoke to the heart, rather than to the mind, and His words evoked an answer from the depths of the consciousness of those who heard Him.

[1] *The Kingdom of Happiness*, by J. Krishnamurti.

On many evenings since, we have recalled His presence and His words, and dwelt with joy upon the memory; some of us have tried to write accounts of His coming, and in the hope that some gleam of the magic and the beauty of that week of intimate communion with Him may reach those who had not the privilege of being present, I append some of our attempts to describe the manner of His coming.

AN IMPRESSION OF THE STAR CAMP AT OMMEN, 1926

THERE were nearly two thousand of us, men and women of all ages, who had gathered here from practically all the countries in Europe, and from Australia and America as well. It was most interesting to watch the various types and nationalities, the differing temperaments; but we all blended and merged into each other and formed one whole, like the varying stones and colours in a mosaic floor. And then the wonderful happy spirit of it all, the *camaraderie;* how ready each one was to help another, to render loving service. For a whole week we had the experience of living a real communal life, and there appeared to be no discord or disharmony amongst us.

The Camp itself was situated amidst the most ideal surroundings, in a large open space of ground, ling-covered, encircled by beautiful pine woods. Those wonderful pine woods! what a joy to get away, quite by oneself, and to wander there, to drink in the living peace and the beauty of it all.

Above all it was such a happiness and a privilege to have our beloved Krishnaji and Dr. Besant with us all

the time, to mingle in their atmosphere and to feel their love poured out to us. They seemed to give of themselves the whole time, never stinting, sending forth help in every way; and lecturing and speaking to us usually twice a day. Did they never get tired? I felt I could never weary of listening to them and watching them, though personally I felt I was not capable of taking in, or digesting, more than a fragment of what was poured forth.

Best of all, out of the day's programme, I think we loved gathering round the Camp-Fire every night. There seemed such a homely atmosphere about it all, and yet one of such utter upliftment and unity. First there would be the music—sometimes National Folk-Songs in unison, or someone would play a violin or sing—then Krishnaji and Dr. Besant would light the Camp-Fire and Krishnaji would sing the Mantram. I loved to see those leaping, living flames rise, and whirl, and dance in the air with all their vivid colour. Though I could not see them, it was quite easy to imagine the spirits of the fire dancing there. Then Krishnaji would speak to us. Just to be near him makes one feel full of joy and contentment, to come within the atmosphere of his beauty, his happiness, his wonderful love and purity. He is always the same Krishnaji, but every time one meets him one sees some fresh characteristic, like a beautiful clear gem raying a different colour at every angle. A wonderful influence seemed to be poured forth through him; and every evening it seemed as if that spiritual atmosphere grew stronger. He

seemed to be urging us on, striving to impart something which no mere words could express. He has such a beautiful way of expressing himself, I think. His talks seem like poems; he symbolizes the spiritual life as a "fair garden" which we must enter, as a deep pool from which we must drink, or as a lovely picture.

On Monday night great power seemed to radiate from him; perhaps the Master spoke through him then—I am not sure, I was too dense to realize it. But on that great Tuesday night, I know the Master came—we must all have known it. From the moment I sat down at the Camp-Fire I sensed a different atmosphere, in a way I cannot describe, but I felt somehow that the Master was very near. Krishnaji himself, too, seemed different; when he got up to speak to us he began by asking us to listen very carefully to what he had to say that evening. As he went on the strength grew, and then, suddenly, I knew that the Master was speaking; that the Great One of all the earth was really here; that we were listening to the same Voice that had spoken on the hills of Galilee, two thousand years ago. One could understand how it was that people had followed Him then for days, not noticing either hunger or fatigue, but only longing to stay with Him. It seemed as if the very trees, the earth, the sky, were listening too.

But how almost despairing He seemed; full of stupendous love for us, and yet we could not understand Him, most of us were too dense, too childish still, too full of our selves. We had expected Him to

manifest Himself in some extraordinary way to us alone, we were still looking out of our own little windows, yet He had come to all the world, to all nature. It is impossible to write how I felt, one cannot put into mere words the deep, true things of life. The greatest thing had happened to us that could ever happen to anyone. Could we take it all in? I know I felt too unworthy.

Afterwards, for some minutes, there was a deep silence, full of awe and reverence; no one moved, and that Divine, Living Love enwrapped us all.

Then, quietly, most of us went back to our tents, or walked awhile, with our thoughts "too deep for tears". It was a night of wonderful beauty and all nature seemed in unity; the Presence was there all that night, brooding over us, yearning over all the world.

The following days flashed past so quickly, and with Thursday evening came our last Camp-Fire and the close of the Conference. I think we all felt sad and rather cast down, to be leaving this wonderful place with all its peace and joy. What great gifts we had been given there, what a wonderful thing we had to take back to the world! Our week had passed so quickly, and yet, looking back, it did not seem a week in time, but an age, longer than all the years since we were born in this life. All the former things seem to have been left behind, and there is only the urge—though sometimes it seems terribly weak—to go on and on, until we reach the Master's feet.

AN IMPRESSION OF THE STAR CONGRESS, OMMEN, JULY, 1926

OMMEN! Is it possible to express in ordinary speech one's impression of the 1926 Star Camp? The brain falters in its attempt, but because, in our beloved Krishnaji's own words: "I would exchange, if I could, my mind and heart with every one of you, so that you may see a new Heaven and a new earth," I make my offering.

Peace, unity, love, radiant joy, rising to their sublimation at the Camp-Fire each night, gives but a shadowy conception of that glimpse into the Holy of Holies which we were privileged to take. That supreme joy is passed, but to the Kingdom of Happiness every one of us may return at will. We have no longer an abstract concept of its glories, but a living reality, based upon experience, for have we not walked therein with our beloved Master, led thereto by our radiant Krishnaji, to whose invitation, tender, appealing, alluring, we listened each day? We must come and see his vision, come and look through his window, linger in this Garden of Happiness, and drink of the pool whose waters quench the thirst only to leave a greater; breathe the scented air and carry away our full capacity

of the perfume to sprinkle around upon our brethren; gather the blossoms, rich and rare. "Come and get intoxicated," he pleaded, and surely the great Camp, as but one soul, replied: "I come."

We had no longer a sense of individuality, nor desired it; no barriers, no reserve remained. We experienced that unity which before we had tried to realize. Had we not become as little children? Was not the great, wide, wonderful, beautiful truth laid bare of all "phrases"? "You can take my heart and my mind, all of them, for I can get my vision again," he said. Thus were we fed each day, and indeed, we realized that we were sharing our feast with glorious angel host, and joined with theirs our *Te Deum*. And what return was asked of us but to feed our hungry brethren!

On that wonderful Tuesday evening the soul of the Camp was laid bare, stripped of its slight apparel of righteousness. Was there ever sweeter torture than the censure of the divine Master? And could any individual present ever again miss an opportunity of feeding the hungry, tending the sick, or visiting the prisoners?

Then came that glorious expansion of consciousness for all when, in all His power, majesty and love, the World-Teacher Himself declared that we could not limit Him to our standards, nor fit Him into our watertight compartments, for: "I belong to all; I belong to all who really love. If you would walk, you must walk with Me; if you would feel, you must feel through My heart."

What could one do but slip silently into the holy night and, amid heather and pines, beneath the star-strewn heavens, re-dedicate oneself, soul and bodies, to His service, which is joy and freedom indeed.

Once again has our divine Master said: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life." Henceforth can we ever give one thought to ourselves save to make of them a purer, more efficient channel for His use, and thus become the Way also?

AN IMPRESSION OF OMMEN

LOOKING back at that pilgrimage of 1926, so long looked forward to, which surely marks an epoch in the life of every-one who was privileged to take part in it, a series of pictures comes up in the mind.

First: the setting chosen by certain Great Ones and hallowed by Their presence; the peaceful stretch of country with its soft-coloured, level horizons; its deep pine woods, where, for centuries, nothing more disturbing could have happened than the gentle dropping of the pine needles to make an even deeper and softer carpet; a place where the wind blows fragrant and untainted by all the pollutions of cities and industrial life.

Then comes the huge crowd of pilgrims, of many nations, tongues and temperaments, and peace almost gives way to pandemonium at first, for, after all, we were not a very evolved crowd as a whole. But the three outstanding figures—one white, one purple, and one very slim and brown—are moving quietly amongst us, holding us all together, subduing our excitability, and graciously tolerant of our many crudities.

Then comes the picture of the great Camp-Fire, lighting up a vast circle of faces on the evening

none of us will ever forget—that evening we all find it so difficult to speak about. When we now ask ourselves: "What did actually happen at Ommen?" perhaps our answer is something like this: "It was there that we actually saw the door of our house begin to open to let the Great Guest enter—our Great Guest, who sees all the despair and chaos in the house of humanity, and who, in His compassion, has been knocking at the door more insistently of late to make us pay more heed to Him. We have all heard that knocking, even those of us who have been prisoners in the cellars of the house in a horror of great darkness; we heard it too, and with painful struggles we climbed out of the darkness, for that sound was like a clarion call to our ears. The door has been so long shut that the hinges are very rusty; we have wanted to open it and throw it wide, but we were very weak and there were so many people who said that it was never meant to open; in fact, that there really was no door at all! But we had our Great Elder Brothers, who have already told us that it *is* there for us to open if we will; and now, encouraged by Them and fired by the enthusiasm of one who says: 'It is so easy, really,' we have no longer any doubt, for we have *seen* it open, and the radiance that poured through the crevice, and the glimpse of the Great Friend who is standing there has dazzled us with wonder."

And now we run back to our friends crying out: "It opens, it opens! We have seen it with our

eyes!" And some in the house hear the news with joy, some seem scarcely interested, and some turn away with sneers and go on with their usual occupations. But we know now, and we say that even the darkness of the cellars can have no power to terrify us again, for though some time may yet pass before we can swing that door wide to receive our Guest, we know that He has infinite patience, and the day will come when He will enter our dingy house and it will be transformed with His Light.

The Same Night

I HAVE just come from the presence of the Lord, and have sought the solitude of the forest, in which to dwell upon all that has occurred, in which to investigate the contents of my consciousness, in which to bring before my mind, clearly and unmistakably, that tiny part of a great event which I have been able to receive. Let me first describe the incident as it appeared to me.

Soon after our Head began to speak, I fell into a condition of contemplation, the state in which I find it easiest to grasp the import of his words. I was concentrating, to the utmost limit of my power, the whole of my attention in the realm of principles, trying to enter the world—his world—where dwell the essences of all things, there to share with him that which he was striving to give. The actual words were audible, and were followed automatically by

the mind, but they were not the important thing. I was trying to unite my consciousness with his, and as he spoke, all my higher capacities seemed quickened, my responsiveness and receptivity at those higher levels seemed to expand, while all the time the mind was analysing the sentences, noticing the repetition, the selection of words, the changing inflections of the voice and the authority with which he spoke.

One part of my consciousness was more alert, while another part went deeper into the contemplative mood. Although I was entirely unmoved emotionally, I frequently found my eyes filling with tears. In this state I realized, some time before the change of pronoun, that the Lord was overshadowing Krishnaji. Their consciousnesses appeared rather like two great globes of light, gradually drawing closer and closer together; occasionally they touched, held for a moment, then parted, but ever the overshadowing power increased. Then as I watched and listened, feeling myself at the same time irresistibly drawn, the two great globes were fused; it was no longer the play of the life and the consciousness of the Lord upon and through Krishnaji, for the twain were blended in one.

It was then that the pronoun changed; that the voice, which previously had been raised—unusually, it seemed to us, for Krishnaji had been speaking with great power, and with a striking note of challenge in his voice and words—became quiet, yet firm, and the great appeal was infinitely compelling.

Infinitely compassionate also was the expression of His love. In a state of supreme happiness, I longed that the Voice should never cease, that He should go on speaking and I listening for ever. I noticed, too, that remarkable phenomenon, which seems always to accompany not only the presence of the Lord, but every definite reference to Him by one of His apostles, a remarkable stillness in the mental, emotional and physical atmosphere—as if, for a time, all motion ceased.

In terms of vision, that which I saw reminded me instantly of the East, for it seemed to me that where Krishnaji stood, there was one of those lotus-shaped pedestals, with a pointed oval screen behind it, upon which it is the custom, in the East, to place the statues of the Lord Buddha. But I saw no other figure, in the lower worlds, than Krishnaji's. Instead, where the figure would have been, there seemed to be a mighty vortex of power pouring down from above, concentrated and focussed in and around the Head of the Order, and then pouring forth, in a quickly widening stream, until it enclosed and enfolded the whole region of the Camp-Fire. It came like a torrent of living light of many hues—gold, red, sky-blue, palest green, amethyst, and silvery white—flooding and filling every aura, penetrating to the very depths of every soul, and thrilling through even the atoms of our bodies with its mighty power. Even now, after the passage of an hour, my physical and subtler bodies are thrilling and trembling from this touch of the Lord.

After the Head had ceased to speak, the power continued to flow and all sat silent, profoundly touched, yet resting in utter peace, in deep serenity—held in a mood of silent joy. As the Mantrams were sung the mood deepened and the pouring out of love and light and blessing still went on, and for me, still goes on; for I feel that, apart from all this external event, something came—I hesitate to write it—to me; I even feel that I must say that some One came to me, and lit within me the same light which shone all about us, formed the same vortex, and started the same wondrous flow.

After the Mantrams were finished I tried to trace this wonderful event to its source and, aided by its power, to look out from those levels where the consciousness possesses the freedom and clarity of the realms beyond the mind; there, as if high up in the heavens, I saw His form—a human form—and though I had known from others that He had worn a human form, so divine had been His self-revealing, that His humanity came almost as a shock, as if the Higher Self started with surprise. He seemed both divinely human, and humanly divine.

Though a thousand tongues may tell me that I dream, I *know* that I saw Him. Here in the calm of the forest, quietly considering the event and meditating upon it, I know with utter and unshakable certainty that, in spite of all my unworthiness, such a vision, such a knowledge, such a realization was truly mine. And still I see Him standing serene, linking Himself to earth through His chosen vehicle,

calling, ever calling, to the hearts of men, inviting them to share with Him the glory, the clarity, the ecstasy of those heights upon which He stands. I cannot speak for others, but I know that henceforth I shall never be the same. Outwardly my life may not change—though it seems inconceivable that it should not—inwardly something has been added, some One has come to dwell with me, One who will never leave me; as if, at last, I had found the Great Companion of my soul.

Until this day I have not lived; I feel as would one who had passed a thousand years entranced in the darkness of the tomb, and who, on being brought to the light, feeling the warmth of the sun upon his face, sees all the world anew, feels all the thrill of birth—the ecstasy of dawn.

ADDENDA II

HEALTH MEASURES

On waking drink the juice of two oranges, neat. Vary this once every ten days with the juice of half a lemon, in a tumbler of water, with no sugar.

After the morning bath, rub the whole body briskly with the palms of the hands, until a warm glow is produced.

Before putting on any tight clothes, stand facing an open window, and take a minimum of ten rhythmic diaphragmatic breaths as follows:

Rest the knuckles (not palms) on the hips, and *relax the body*. Inhale slowly through the nose, forcing the air down into the region of the abdomen, which should become distended; inhale further, expanding chest and ribs to the utmost. Pause. Exhale slowly through nostrils, drawing in the stomach muscles, and gradually relaxing the chest; keep control of the air until it is finally expelled. Pause. Repeat ten times rhythmically. When a measure of perfection in this exercise has been attained, begin to draw *prana* [1] in, consciously, by the following method:

[1] *Prana* means vitality. See *The Etheric Double*, by Col. E. A. Powell. (Theosophical Publishing House.)

Visualize *prana* as a fiery, golden energy everywhere present. *Will* that a powerful stream shall enter the head with the breath, and pass right down through the lungs, stomach and legs, to the feet. While exhaling, hold in this *prana*. Repeat the effort of will with each breath, packing the *prana* into the body till it rises higher and higher, and eventually fills the whole body with its vivid, vital force. After the whole body is fully charged, direct a special current of *prana* to any part of the body which requires healing.

Repeat this exercise during the day, particularly when walking. Cultivate an upright carriage and the habit of always breathing deeply and rhythmically, through the nostrils and down to the abdomen.

The ideal in diet is to obtain the maximum of nutrition, energy, vitality and heat from a minimum of effort of the digestive system. Drink one to two pints of water daily, between meals, but take the main meals dry. Endeavour to have one meal consisting of fresh fruit in season, dried fruit, nuts and honey, each day. If constipated, eat six figs a day; black Spanish figs are the best for this purpose. Have one salad meal a day, with selections from all the usual green salad foods, including raw shredded vegetables, grated carrot, turnips, etc., olive oil and lemon juice, brown bread and butter and cheese. No sweets or liquids should be taken with this meal. The third meal may be chosen to taste, adhering to the above principles. Wallace's P. R. Coffee is the least harmful and may be taken

half an hour after a meal. Tea must be weak, and taken only once a day. Hot toast, muffins, etc. must be avoided; cakes, pastries and sweetmeats must be reduced to a minimum. Pay special attention to thorough mastication, and under-eat rather than over-eat.

Take at least half an hour's walking exercise every day and try to lie down for a quarter of an hour or more, according to necessity, after the midday meal. Be in the sun as much as possible, and take sun baths, letting the sun shine directly on the skin, whenever convenient.

Drink one bottle of Golden Mostelle wine a week. Unless of a bilious or adipose tendency, take olive oil emulsion every other night, during alternate fortnights. To make this, purchase Mapleton's Olive Oil Emulsifier and the purest olive oil obtainable; mix equal quantities (one dessert spoon) of each in a breakfast cup and add boiling water, stirring thoroughly while pouring; drink as hot as possible on retiring for the night.

Practise relaxation regularly until it becomes habitual; remind yourself of the necessity for it continually, and become relaxed immediately, whenever you sit down. Forbid yourself all unnecessary gesture and teach yourself to sit perfectly still at all times, using only just sufficient energy for the task in hand, and conserving all the rest for future use; you will thus enable the body to recuperate.

Before going to sleep see that every nerve and muscle in the body is thoroughly relaxed and at rest;

watch a baby resting and you will receive an object lesson in relaxation.

Read *Power through Repose*.[1] The ideal mental attitude is based on the recognition that the universe is governed by exact law, that we are all in God's hands, and He is eternally beneficent and wise. He is unfolding and pursuing a definite plan with regard to His universe; therefore everything which happens within it is allowed for in His plan. Your illness and your return to health are both governed by exact law; you are ill because you have contravened the law, and you will become perfectly healthy as soon as the effects of that contravention are neutralized, and perfect harmony and balance are restored. Accept this fact, and free yourself completely from all sense of bitterness or rebellion. Try to put yourself into perfect harmony with nature, with your environment, and with all manifested life. Live your life according to the law of love, and express the Divine within you by loving service rendered to everything around you—men, animals and plants. Live for others and strive to forget yourself. Put your whole trust in God and in His perfect wisdom; give Him your complete confidence, and His life will flow freely through you, "mightily and sweetly" ordering all things.

Healing meditations are helpful to certain temperaments; their object is to restore the harmonious flow of the Divine Life through the whole nature; this life, which is the vital energy of the universe,

[1] By A. P. Call.

is everywhere present in abundance; its steady and continuous flow through us maintains us in perfect health and strength. Illness is a sign that we are temporarily shut off from this universal supply of healing force, through lack of inner and outer harmony. We must attain a state of spiritual, mental, emotional and physical harmony and accord, whereupon the divine healing and vitalizing power will flow freely through us, and we shall be whole.

One method of achieving this is to visualize the Divine Life as being everywhere present and as filling the upper air with its radiant and golden glow; reach up towards it with all the power of thought and will, and aspire ardently to become one with it, to embody it within yourself, so that it may flow freely through you.

Dwell in thought upon God as the source of all power and life, and seek to realize His presence and to lose yourself in Him. As a step towards this consummation, think of yourself as a chalice into which the Divine Life is poured; as you aspire to at-one yourself with God, the cup will increase in size, growing ever higher into the inner worlds where dwells the healing life.

Think of this life, in all its glowing golden splendour, as pouring down upon you and into you in a torrent of vital force, filling the "cup" to overflowing, and flooding your whole nature with its power, healing you completely, and flowing out through your heart to heal the sorrows and sufferings of the world.

Perform this meditation regularly day by day, perferably at early morning, midday, and before retiring. When you are in perfect health yourself, it may be used as a valuable means of conveying healing power to others.

More detailed information upon the subject of health may be gained from my books: *An Occult View of Health and Disease* and *Health and the Spiritual Life*.[1]

[1] Theosophical Publishing House.

LIST OF BOOKS FOR STUDY AND PRACTICE

Power through Repose — A. P. Call
All the Penny Pamphlets on Theosophy by various authors
The Birth and Evolution of the Soul — Annie Besant
In the Outer Court — „
The Path of Discipleship — „
Initiation, the Perfecting of Man — „
Man, Visible and Invisible — Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater
The Etheric Double — A. E. Powell
The Astral Body — „
A Study in Consciousness — Annie Besant
Thought-Power, Its Control and Culture — „
Thought-Forms — Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater
The Great Plan — Annie Besant
An Introduction to Yoga — „
A Primer of Higher Space — C. Bragdon
Nirvana — G. S. Arundale
The Centre and the Circumference — „
Thoughts of the Great — „
Thoughts on "At the Feet of the Master" — „
The Masters — Annie Besant
The Inner Government of the World — „
The Masters and the Path — C. W. Leadbeater

All the publications by Mr. Ernest Wood.

Meditation for Beginners	J. I. Wedgwood
Invisible Helpers	C. W. Leadbeater
A Short and Easy Method of Prayer	Madame Guyon
The Practice of the Presence of God	Brother Lawrence
Spiritual Maxims	,,
Towards Discipleship	J. Krishnamurti
The Supersensual Life	Jacob Boehme
Practical Occultism	H. P. Blavatsky
Talks on the Path of Occultism	Annie Besant and C. W. Leadbeater
The Light of Asia	Sir Edwin Arnold
The Song Celestial	,,
The Elements of Astronomy	Sir Robert Ball
The Story of the Heavens	,,
The Story of the Sun	,,
The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali	
Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom and *The Early Teachings of the Masters*	C. Jinarajadasa
The First Principles of Theosophy	,,
I Promise	,,
In His Name	,,
The Vision of the God-Man	,,

Books on Health

Healing Methods Old and New	E. A. Gardner
Ways to Perfect Health	I. S. Cooper
The Secret of Happiness	,,

The Science of Peace	Bhagavan Das
The Science of Social Organisation	,,
The Science of the Emotions	,,

List of Books for Meditation

At the Feet of the Master
The Doctrine of the Heart
Light on the Path
The Golden Verses of Pythagoras
The Bhagavad-Gita, translated by Annie Besant
The Idyll of the White Lotus
Christ in You
Awaken
Spirit of the Unborn
The Imitation of Christ
Meditations on "At the Feet of the Master"
The Voice of the Silence
The Kingdom of Happiness
The Gospel of the Buddha
The Meditations of Marcus Aurelius

All these books are obtainable from the

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Printed by A. K. Sitarama Shastri, at the Vasanta Press, Adyar, Madras.